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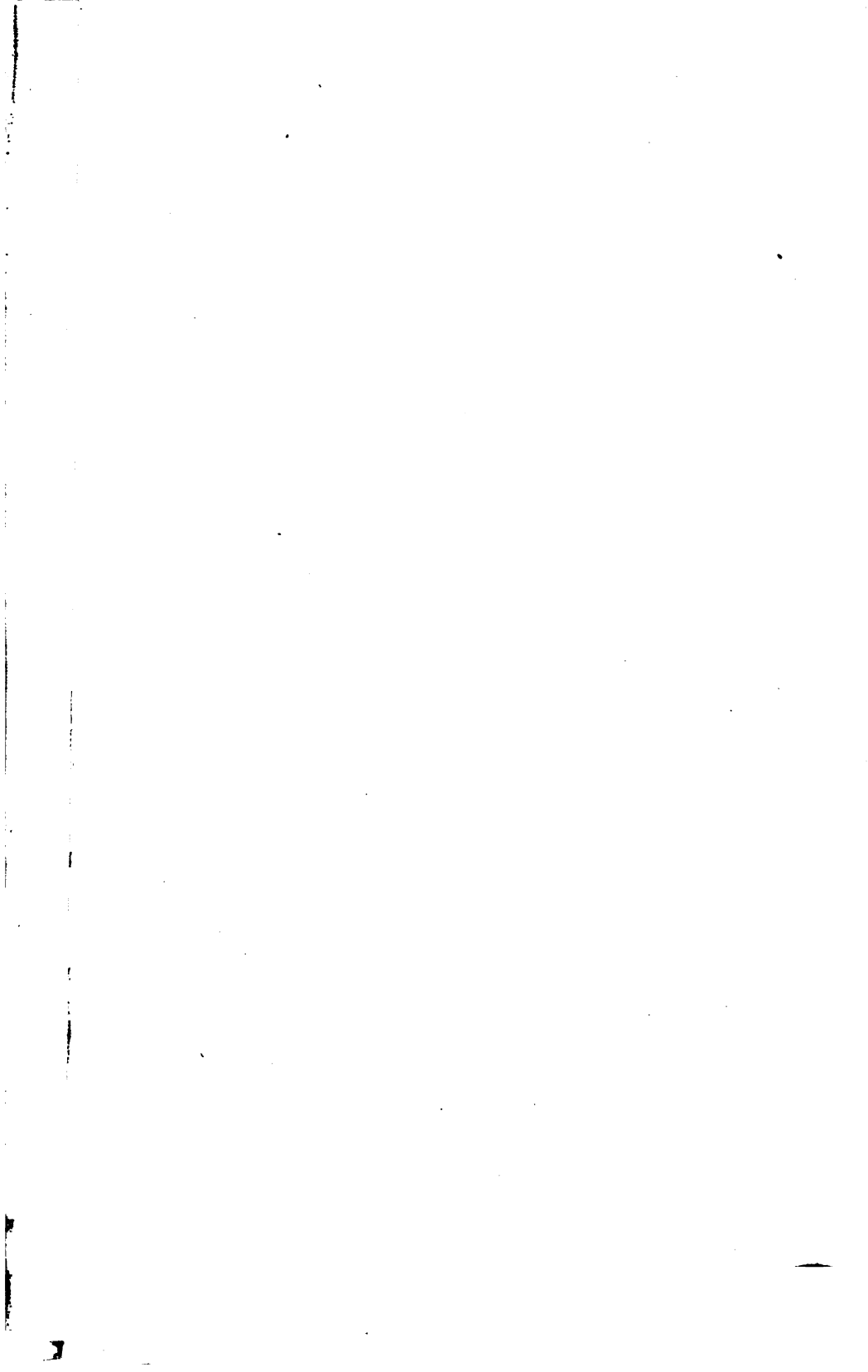
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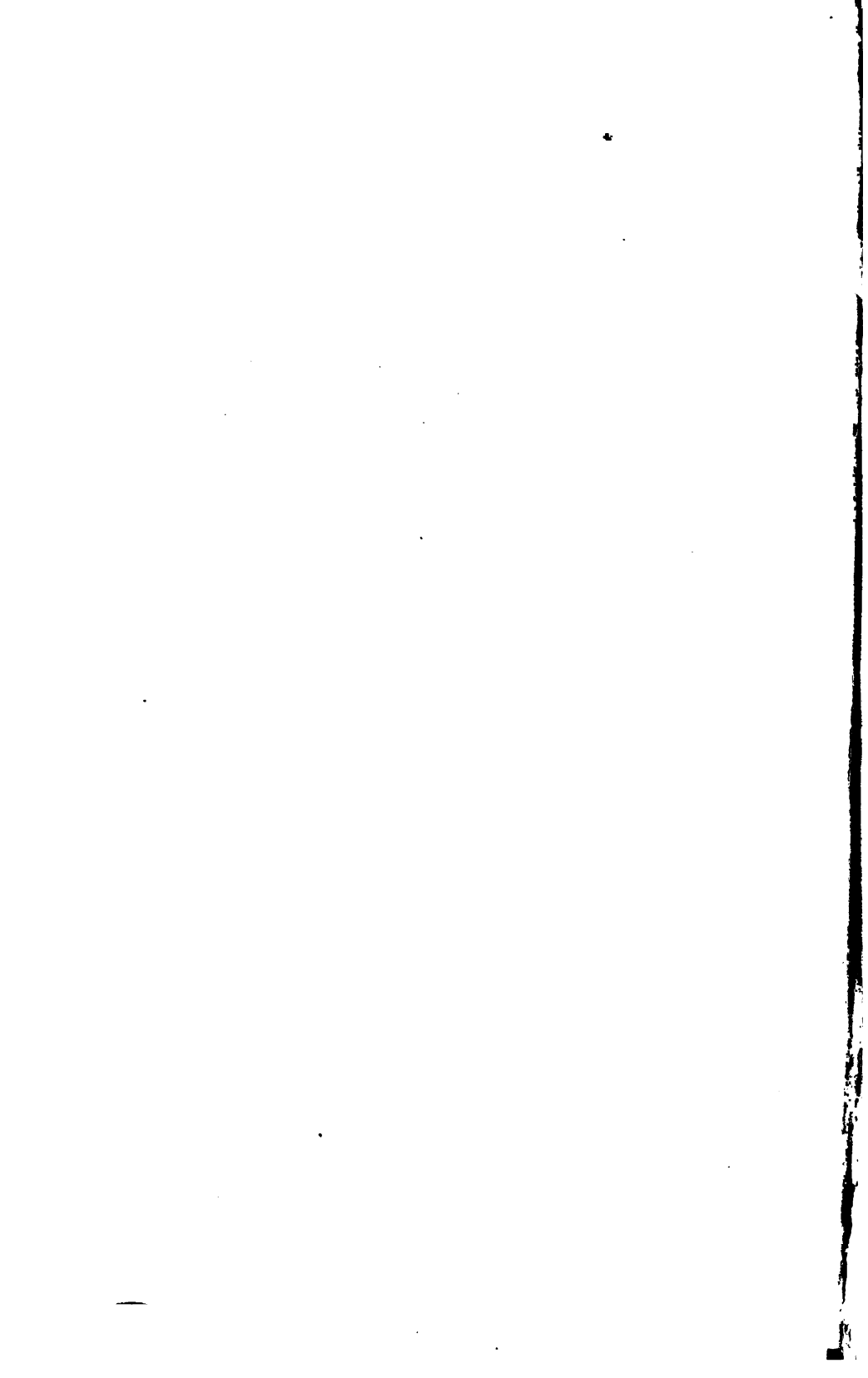
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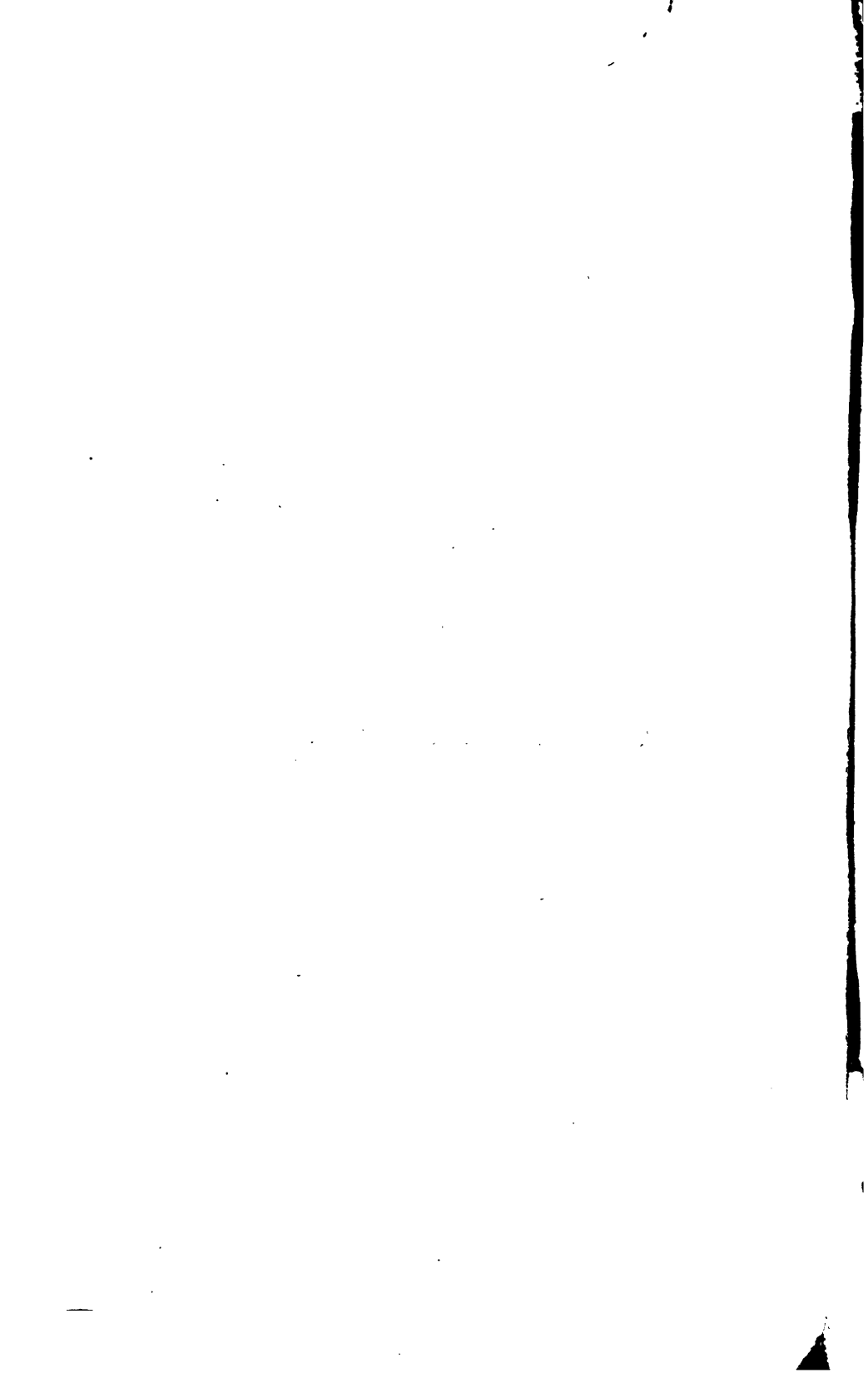


Augustus Sessopp  
Helston.  
Cornwall..

RATIONALE

OF

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE



6

THE

**RATIONALE OF DISCIPLINE**

AS EXEMPLIFIED IN

THE HIGH SCHOOL OF EDINBURGH

BY

PROFESSOR PILLANS

---

What is the whole business of education, but a practical application of rules, deduced from our own experiments, or from those of others, on the most effectual modes of developing and of cultivating the intellectual faculties and the moral principles?—DUGALD STEWART.

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## PREFACE.

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MUCH has been written on the right training of youth, from the days of Plato and Quintilian down to the present time. The age at which a boy's education should begin—what he should learn, and in what order—what should be taught to all, and what reserved for particular classes and professions—what portion of the religious element should enter into the course of instruction—whether a public or private education should be preferred,—are questions which have long divided both the speculations of philosophers and the practice of parents. But the actual details of school management and discipline have rarely been communicated to the world. No sooner is a boy committed to the charge of a domestic tutor or of a public teacher, than the scene closes, and little is heard of what passes, till he come forth in due time more or less of a scholar or a dunce. Like so much raw material thrown into a machine, he is subjected to a long

and tedious process : but the principle of the mechanism, the mutual relation of the parts, the modes of working, and the various steps and manipulations of the process, have seldom been described so minutely and intelligibly, as to enable the public to form a judgment of their value and efficiency. The art and practice of teaching, as exemplified in the daily intercourse of teacher and pupil, seems, like other crafts and mysteries, to have been reserved for the initiated.

This was eminently true down to the close of the last century : but in the course of the present, a willingness, apparently ripening into an earnest desire, to be informed on this matter, has been gaining ground. The discussions which arose out of the rival pretensions of Bell and Lancaster mainly contributed to give this direction to public curiosity, and induced many, not immediately connected with practical instruction, both to witness, and to read about, the internal organization of large schools. But it was to those schools only, whose professed object was to educate the children of the working classes, that attention was drawn. Foundation schools of older date, where youth of a higher class and less tender age were engaged in the study of the ancient languages, were screened from observation by their very antiquity ; and there was, besides, enough of the obscure and the recondite in the subjects taught there, to repel inspection and scrutiny : nor indeed was investigation courted either by

the teachers or the patrons of such time-honoured institutions. But, seeing so much has been done, during the half of this century that is past, in the creation and amelioration of schools for the poor, and so little for the improvement of those whose very antiquity makes it likely that they require revision, it is time that more light were let into the arcana of the classical school-room, and the public invited to consider, how far the system pursued there is keeping pace with the progressive tendencies of the age we live in. Of these tendencies a striking and gratifying proof has been given, in the superior means of instruction devised and provided for the working classes ; and, in such circumstances, it is natural to enquire, whether any of the principles so successfully acted upon in certain stages of education, and with certain descriptions of pupils, may not admit of more extensive application. Taking it for granted that every thing taught in our grammar-schools is well worth the learning, it still remains for us to consider, whether methods of teaching may not be found that shall save the time and give better direction to the labour of the pupil, and methods, above all, that shall inspire a love of study, open a finer and freer career to early talent, and reduce the number of failures to the smallest possible amount.

To these important ends few things seem more likely to conduce, than an intelligible account of the details and results of actual experiments, drawn up

by those who have made them. Such results, confirmed or corrected by the experience of others, may be expected to lead to the adoption of improved methods wherever there is room for them.

Some eight-and-twenty years ago, in one of those long summer vacations which the Scottish University system permits Professors to enjoy, the fancy struck me of committing to paper, notes and recollections of the ten years I had taught in the High School of Edinburgh. I was then fresh from the scenes and experiments of which I had a mind to preserve a memorial; and the motive was no higher, at first, than a wish to secure reminiscences of a period of my life, which had been one of considerable exertion as well as of great enjoyment. But as I proceeded with this pastime, I was insensibly led, in recording facts, to fall back upon principles; and on principles which, simple and almost self-evident as they appeared to me, were so far from being universally adopted in practice, or even admitted in theory, that they had scarcely been embodied in words, or made accessible through the press to public discussion. It was then it occurred to me, that if the principle were illustrated, as well as the practice explained, I might be preparing materials for a work of deeper and more general interest than could be felt for the mere details of management in a particular school, were it ever so distinguished or ever so numerous attended.

With this view, I arranged my memoranda under separate heads, corresponding to the several new methods and modifications of old ones, which I had ventured to introduce into the organization and discipline of the existing system ; taking care to state under each head, not so much the peculiar circumstances of the High School which called for a change, as the principles on which the changes seemed to me to be required and justified.

In following out this idea, I came more and more to be convinced, that if the materials were moulded into a shape fit for the public eye, the result might suggest hints and lead to enquiries not unimportant in their bearing upon the question of National Education, both as it regards the many and the few ;—a subject upon which the public mind was then, as it is now, very much in the dark.

Since the period to which these Notes refer, extending from 1810 to 1820, much has doubtless been done towards the elucidation and practical application of the rationale of teaching, by the Hills of Hazelwood and Bruce Castle, by Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and by the Editors of that truly excellent work, the ‘Quarterly Journal of Education,’ which the British public, not much to their credit, allowed to die prematurely for lack of encouragement. The number of intelligent teachers, too, has greatly increased since then, and is daily increasing. Nevertheless, it is marvellous and mortifying to reflect, how much still remains

of the old leaven, and how little way the art of training the young to learning and virtue has advanced, as a branch of general knowledge, beyond its infancy.

When I had taxed my memory to the full extent, and came to look over what I had written *currente calamo*, the dread of incurring the reproach of egotism, and appearing as the vain-glorious hero of my own tale, put to flight all thoughts of publication. The manuscript was accordingly thrown aside, and has lain by me for more than a quarter of a century. But as I draw nearer to the close of life, I grow less sensitive to what scorers may say, and more desirous to lend my aid, or at least to shew my good-will, in the cause to which my best days have been devoted. I have, therefore, set myself to the task, ere it be too late, of revising the mass of papers, and reducing the whole into a readable form,—resolved, at last, that it shall go forth on its mission.

I have done my best to remedy the defects of the original manuscript, by condensing the sense, improving the diction, lopping off redundancies and repetitions, abridging some details, omitting others, and removing a third set to an appendix of Notes. The arrangement and substance of the whole remain, however, the same; nor has the manuscript suffered any alteration which can affect its character as a contemporary and authentic document.

In describing the new methods introduced into the discipline which I found established in the Rector's Class, and in representing them as improvements upon the old, it may be thought that I am disparaging the merits and undervaluing the services of one who was my teacher, as well as my predecessor : and perhaps the fear of incurring such an imputation may have had its effect in dissuading me from earlier publication. But there is no good ground for a charge of this kind. In a brief memoir of Dr. Adam, printed in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and on sundry other occasions, both public and private, I have spoken of my old master with that affection and reverence, which no pupil of his, and no lover of the Classics, can ever cease to feel for his memory. But the truth is, he began his career as a public teacher at a time when nobody thought of disturbing the long-established routine. Prompted, moreover, by an enthusiastic love of classical learning, and a desire to promote and diffuse it, he commenced early that series of works—his Latin Grammar, his Roman Antiquities, his Summary of Ancient Geography, his Classical History and Biography, and his Latin-English Dictionary,—which have earned for him a high and well-deserved reputation, not in this island only, but over Europe and America. The completion of works intended for publication absorbed much of his thoughts, and exercised his indefatigable industry ; and it is not, therefore, to be wondered at, if, with such lofty ends in

view, he should have looked upon the teaching of his class, excellent though it was, as a secondary object,—one, at least, to which he was not required to consecrate the undivided energies of his mind.

With me, the case was different. I took, as became me, a less ambitious flight. My public teaching began in an age of innovation and reform; and desirous that I should not be behind in the march of improvement, I gave myself wholly up to the business of my class, content with working in an humbler sphere for the passing generation, without attempting to leave behind me such lasting memorials as my predecessor had bequeathed to posterity.

COLLEGE OF EDINBURGH,  
*May 1851.*



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\* To these Lectures I prefix now, as I did when they were first published, the following Notice:—

“The Author is aware of the disadvantages he labours under, in committing to the press what was originally composed with the view of being addressed to a youthful audience, as introductory to the business of an Academical Session;—a circumstance which encourages, if it does not justify, a looseness of arrangement, an amplitude of illustration, and a use of ornament, but indifferently calculated to stand the test of reading in the closet. He has yielded, however, to the wishes of a considerable number of his hearers, to whom it appeared that some of the views thrown out in these lectures might, at the present time, be useful to the cause of sound Education.”

## LECTURE THIRD.

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ERRATUM.

Page 19. penult line, *for* 'possibility' *read* 'impossibility.'

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION OF MONITORIAL DISCIPLINE.

THE High School of Edinburgh, at the time of my predecessor's death, consisted, as it had done for ages before, of five Classes or Forms, with one teacher for each of them. The Fifth or highest class was assigned to the Rector. The four Assistants or under Masters began, each in his turn, with a First Class of rudimentary Latin, and carried the same boys forward through the stages of Second, Third, and Fourth Classes, till, at the close of four years, his pupils entered the Fifth Class, and he commenced afresh with a new set of beginners.

The rule of the School was, that the pupils should remain two years with the Rector, thus making the full complement of attendance a course of six years of classical training. The number of the entire school, during the first ten years of the present century, reached an annual average of 560, and of these the Rector had generally about 150.\*

\* See Dr. Steven's "History of the High School of Edinburgh," Appendix, p. 122. According to the Matriculation Register, the number of pupils enrolled in the class which I received from Dr. Adam in 1810 was 144; in that of 1820 it was 288.

There never had been, among the four lower classes, any system of promotion according to proficiency, except that which occurred daily in each individual class, by the taking of places. No amount of industry or ability could shorten the period of four years in the preliminary stages, and no amount of idleness or deficiency extended the time of probation required for the Rector's class. The set of boys who began the elements of Latin in October remained under the same master, without a chance of promotion or detention, till the end of the fourth year. Now it is self-evident that a hundred boys, commencing this study at the age of eight or nine, with various degrees of previous culture, and various powers and habits of attention, will soon begin to exhibit considerable differences of aptness and docility; and if they are not sifted and assorted at intervals, but are carried on from stage to stage till the close of the fourth year, the disparity in acquirement will be constantly augmenting, till it reach its maximum at the time when they are transferred to the head master. But, in his case, there was an additional element of disparity. The Rector's class, at the October commencement, was made up of two sets of boys;—one set, who had been pupils of his the year before, and the other, who came to him from the fourth class; and both, having been trained under different teachers, were in all the gradations, on the one hand, of ignorance and incapacity, and on the other, of ability and acquirement.

Such were the materials and circumstances I had to deal with, and to make the most of: for any attempt to alter the constitution of the seminary would have involved me in endless disputes and heartburnings, both

with the patrons and with the teachers, and could only have ended, I was well aware, in bitter disappointment. During the two years I was a pupil in Dr. Adam's class, I had myself been struck with the unmanageable nature of such discordant elements. It was too manifest to escape the observation even of a boy, that a considerable portion of the school hours was lost time both to the higher members of the class and to the lower. According to my recollection of what took place in the parsing, translating, and examining upon a prescribed portion of an ancient author,—which is the main part of the business of a classical school,—the daily routine may be thus described. The class being assembled in the morning, the lesson was begun to be read, sometimes by inviting to the task the first boy from the foot of the class who thought he had mastered it, but more frequently by calling up some of the fifteen or twenty highest boys. While this first construing and questioning was going on, attention was kept tolerably alive throughout the class by the usual fear of penal consequences. Then followed the repetition of the same thing, over and over again, in other parts of the class; a process which excited some interest among those immediately below the boy on his legs, but little or none elsewhere. To the upper boys, who felt they had already possession of the lesson, this repeated translation had all the wearisomeness of a thrice told tale. The lower boys, again, lived in the hope that the school time would expire before it came to their turn to say; and both sets, accordingly, gave themselves up to strenuous idleness. In truth, with a limited time, and a large number of boys, (and the difficulty, of course, increased with the number,) it was

next to impossible, were the earnestness and activity of the teacher ever so great, to test the preparation at home and attention in the class-room of every pupil, or to overcome the temptation to neglect a task, which, it was shrewdly conjectured, might never be called for.

Such was the general aspect of the Rector's class about the end of last century; and there is no reason to suppose that it was different, or altered for the better, in the first nine years of the present, these being the latest of a long incumbency.

With a mind full of these recollections, and the reflections to which they gave rise, I entered on the duties of a public teacher, which were altogether new to me, not merely with an oppressive sense of responsibility, but with feelings little short of despair. I was early and deeply impressed with the notion, that it was incumbent on me to find fit employment, both in school and out of it, for the mind of every boy committed to my charge, and at the same time to supply motives strong enough to engage him in the task; in other words, so to apportion the daily lessons, that no boy should find them so difficult as not to be tempted to make trial of his strength, nor yet so easy as to encourage indolence at home and habits of inattention in school. But how was this to be accomplished, when any average that could be struck, of work to be done, was sure to be too difficult for one third of the class, and too easy for another? A majority of the boys, during a considerable portion of school-hours, took no interest in what was going on; some, from thinking they had nothing more to learn, others, because they had little capacity and less inclination to profit by what they



heard. From such a state of things what could be expected to result, but either constrained silence, lassitude, and mental inaction, or continual outbreaks of noisy playfulness and petty annoyances, which could only be kept under, and that but for a time, by reproachful vociferation, bursts of real or affected indignation, or the old quack recipe of corporal punishment? And how were evils so deep-seated, and apparently inevitable, to be dealt with remedially?

Speculations were about this time afloat, as to the possibility of extending the elements of education to the lowest and poorest youthful population of the country, by adopting the method of 'mutual instruction.' This method, though not altogether unknown or unpractised before, in some of the grammar and parish schools of Britain, had never attracted attention nor been reduced to a system, till Dr. Andrew Bell published an account of its being extensively in use among the Hindoo population of India, and particularly at Madras. Dr. Bell's book, however, made little impression, and had been almost forgotten, when Joseph Lancaster took up the cause of popular education; and, supplying by enthusiasm and indefatigable activity what was wanting in knowledge and philosophy, awakened the public mind to the subject, and organized establishments, where the children of the poor, who had hitherto gone without education at all, were taught reading, writing, and cyphering, either gratuitously, or at a very low rate; and with unexampled rapidity. It does not appear, that either Dr. Bell or Mr. Lancaster, at this period, contemplated their new mode of teaching in any other light than as an economical measure, which would confer

the boon of elementary instruction in quarters where it could otherwise have been gotten, either very imperfectly, or not at all. Whatever may have been said afterwards, neither of these gentlemen seems at this time to have dreamed of applying the *monitorial* system to the higher branches of knowledge, or to schools for the children of the wealthy. Certain at least it is, that nothing had been done in this way up to the year 1811. Some striking examples, however, had ere then been exhibited of the efficiency of the method, in schools for the poor formed under Lancaster's direction.

It occurred to me that the saving of expense and time was not the only, nor perhaps the most important result which the new method promised, and that advantage might be taken of its main principle, wherever large numbers were to be taught simultaneously; and especially in the class and with the subjects which I had to teach. It appeared possible that the difficulties which I had regarded as insurmountable might be obviated, by bringing the superior spirit and knowledge of the higher boys to bear upon the less advanced, and using it to stimulate and inform them. Facilities for carrying out any such plan presented themselves in the established mode of teaching by examination, and the order of sitting and precedence in the class. This will be best understood by the following details.

At the commencement of the session (on the 1st of October), all the pupils entering on their second year of attendance in the Rector's class sat highest, preserving the same places which they had held on the day of public examination in August preceding. Next to

them sat, in their class order also, those who came from the fourth class. Lowest of all sat the strangers who joined the class from other places of instruction, and in the order of enrolment. It is obvious that this distribution was very far from indicating the actual proficiency of the newly formed class. The daily examination on the lessons, in the course of which, when a boy could not answer a question or construe a sentence, the first sitting below who could, took precedence both of him and of all who were equally ignorant, had a tendency to adjust the places to the proficiency of every pupil. Indeed, the order of sitting just mentioned being understood by the boys themselves not to correspond to their scholarship, had a remarkable effect for a while in keeping emulation alive. The dullest boys of the second year, feeling themselves suddenly elevated in the class to a height unknown before, made desperate efforts to retain their places, and to escape the ridicule they might incur by sinking rapidly below the new comers; while the head boys of the Fourth class were eager to distinguish their early career in the Rector's, by taking precedence of those who were a year in advance of them.\* It was so desirable to keep this sentiment alive, that for some time none but the easiest questions were put to the lower boys of the second year, that they might be stimulated to farther exertion in maintaining their new position, and that at all events their feelings might be spared, by letting them gently down. It was necessary,

\* *Hi proprium decus et partum indignantur honorem  
Ni teneant, vitamque volunt pro laude pacisci:  
Hos successus alit; possunt quia posse videntur.*

*Æn. v. 239.*

however, to shorten this period of probation, for various reasons, chiefly because, as the class increased in numbers, the time required for this gradual adjustment would have interfered materially with other important objects.

In a week or two, therefore, after the meeting of the school in October, when its numbers were nearly complete, I accompanied the whole of my class to the writing-room, and prescribed an exercise, so contrived that it should serve as a test of their actual attainments in Latin. These class-written exercises I carried home, and, having marked and numbered the errors in each, made out a class-list, arranged according to the number of blunders in each, from those whose performances were faultless, down to those who had failed entirely. Next morning the list of names, beginning with the highest, was slowly read out, and the boys took their places according to it. Supposing the exercise to have been judiciously selected, and the performance of it carefully watched, a tolerably accurate scale of present scholarship was in this manner obtained, graduating downwards from the head boy to the lowest. I then proceeded (1811,) to subdivide the class into decads, on the principle of having one pupil of superior scholarship attached to every nine boys of the class. Taking the number of the class at 200, the twenty best scholars whom the result of the trial exercise had placed at the top, were ranged round the room at equal distances, and to each of them was assigned a division of nine boys, beginning with the 21st, who, with the next 8, constituted the first division, and so on till the whole number was disposed of, and twenty divisions of ten each were

formed. Three benches, placed triangularly, with open corners, were allotted to each division, (for the standing posture after the first twenty minutes is irksome to boys and distracts attention,) so that, sitting thus compactly and facing each other, all might be heard distinctly in their own division, without interfering with the divisions adjoining.

Let us now attend to the nature of the power acquired by this simple contrivance,—the way in which the machine worked,—and the practical ends to which it was made subservient.

One of the prime objects of the new arrangement, was to make sure that a considerable portion of the lesson should be said daily by every pupil.

The Latin classes in the High School met four hours a day, with two assemblings and two dismissals. Allowing four minutes for each, and deducting these sixteen, the whole disposable time was 224 minutes, or little more than one minute per day to each boy. But nothing could have been more unprofitable than to fritter down the hours into such minute fragments in a class so advanced as the Rector's. Among beginners, who are chiefly employed in the declension of nouns and inflexion of verbs, a sort of running fire of questions may be kept up among the pupils; but at a later stage, when difficult classics come to be construed and commented on, a considerable portion of the time ought to be occupied, partly by individual pupils, in construing and being fully examined; partly by the master himself, in explaining and illustrating the lesson in a familiar, discursive, and interesting manner, so as to take possession of young minds, and insensibly fix their attention on the

business in hand. It is manifest, therefore, that in following the old plan, few days could pass without leaving a considerable portion of the class unexamined, and of those who were examined, many must have escaped with short and occasional questions, which their previous knowledge of the language enabled them to answer, how idle soever they might have been up to the time they entered the school-room. Boys are both shrewd and sanguine calculators: they take their play and neglect their preparation, whenever there is a reasonable presumption that they will either not be called upon, or that they may make a shift to answer an easy question. It will be best seen how far these encouragements to indolence were withdrawn, by explaining at large the manner in which the business was conducted on the new plan.

Suppose a lesson,—an Ode of Horace for example,—to be prescribed for the morrow at the close of the day's business: on which occasion, a few hints were given as to the subject and the poet's mode of treating it, and perhaps also, as to one or two of the difficulties,—where to look, and what to look for, in order to obtain a solution of them; the object in all this being to smoothe the way to the willing student, and tempt those to ply their task over night, whom the impossibility of their accomplishing it without such aid might discourage. On the morrow, the business began in the assembled class with calling two or three boys successively to construe and be examined on the lesson: and I need scarcely add that no regular order of calling was observed. In this matter, it is necessary to be on one's guard even against contracting a habit of routine, which, however unconscious of it the teacher

may be, his pupils will readily find out and calculate upon. If the boy first called declines saying, or attempts the lesson and fails, the first below who succeeds takes his place, as explained in speaking of the old method. After a strict examination on the Ode in all its aspects and bearings, grammatical, prosodial, antiquarian, historical, critical, and geographical, it was translated continuously, or at least with less interruption of questioning, and read perhaps a third time without the Latin, a free rendering of the sense being then encouraged. All this exhausted the first of the two morning hours, more or less as might happen : after which, instead of travelling over the same ground with other boys till it became stale and tedious, the signal was given for the divisions to form. The monitors are instantly at their posts : the lowest divisions, who have least time to lose, moving first, are at work immediately, and all in the space of three minutes. Here the business is, to construe the lesson again under the inspection of a monitor, who is to perform among the nine of his division, as nearly as possible, but less excursively, the same office which he has witnessed the master doing with the assembled class. He is instructed to divide the passage into such portions as that all shall say a part, and to take care it be done accurately ; and having thus secured a translation of the whole, to follow it up with as many of the miscellaneous questions as the time will permit. If the object were, to have done with this lesson within the morning meeting, the divisions, after being half an hour employed in the way described, re-assembled in the general class, and the lesson was once more gone over, the master selecting those to say, who, as certi-

fied by the monitors' reports, made the poorest or the best appearance in the divisions. In the afternoons, the same process was gone through with a lesson in a prose writer, such as Livy or Sallust, and next day, before the new lesson was begun, a few minutes were spent in ascertaining that the class generally had mastered the old one; the full revisal of the week's lessons being reserved for Saturday. At the close of every division-time, the monitors were bound to give in a written report, containing the names of the *nine*, and marks appended to shew how each had said; and these slips of papers furnished me with the means of detecting and exposing negligence, as well as of rewarding the diligent with approbation.

This was the ordinary way of proceeding with the main business of the day, that is, literal translation, with parsing, syntax, and miscellaneous questioning and prelecting, and then a free rendering of the text, without the Latin. But the monitorial method is so manageable an instrument, that it admits of an endless variety of applications. Of these it may be worth while to mention a few.

1. When the saying by heart of grammar, or of choice portions of the authors read, was part of the business prescribed, it is obvious that, in a numerous class, assurance of every boy's preparation could not be gained upon the old plan, without an extravagant and wearisome waste of time: Whereas, by the new method, it was enough for the master to hear the monitors say as much as to satisfy him of their preparation; and in divisions, a few minutes sufficed to have an accurate report of every boy's success or failure.

2. In cases where there was a good deal of work to



be done in divisions, or when the examination and prelection on the lesson extended beyond the usual limits, it was found an economy of time, to subdivide the class only once a day, and that in the afternoon meeting, so as to have all the lessons gone through in divisions, at one sitting.

3. Another variety in the application of the monitorial method was the following. On the first assembling of the class, the Divisions were ordered to form immediately, with the view of having the lesson for the day gone over in them for the first time; it being understood, that nothing was required on such occasions but a simple and intelligible translation of the passage. This translation was done upon the responsibility of the monitors, who were constituted judges *ad interim*, whether or not the meaning were correctly given. Still farther to ensure previous preparation on their part, they were enjoined to translate in the hearing of their division, part, sometimes the whole, of the new lesson. This simple translation, interrupted by no questions but such as were necessary for the comprehension of the syntax, was speedily performed; not half an hour elapsed before I was made aware, by reports from the monitors, what boys professed the new lesson, who did not, and who succeeded or failed in the attempt. On re-assembling, appeals were heard, *i. e.* all those who had objections to the interpretation given, or allowed to be given without correction, by the monitor of their division, were invited to state them. When the appellant rose, the monitor of his division rose also in self-defence; and the discussion that ensued never failed to prove interesting, being on a topic which had so recently

been under the view of all, and on which every one had already formed an opinion. It was a sure result of this arrangement, that the obscure and ambiguous passages of the lesson were brought under review, and the attention of the class fixed upon them till the true sense was rivetted in their memory. More was done in this way towards a full comprehension of the passage, than could have been effected by any number of translations upon the old plan, where little or no discrimination was made between what was difficult and what was easy,—the one repeated as often as the other, and both *usque ad nauseam*.

When the stumbling-blocks were thus removed, the lesson was construed entire in the hearing of the assembled class, and opportunity taken to convey collateral information, tending to cultivate the taste and open the mind to a comprehension of the author's main object, and a perception of his beauties. And all this was impressed on the memory by once more construing in divisions, with all the additional lights acquired by the intervening illustrations.

4. There is another variety in the application of the monitorial method, which was occasionally employed, and with the best effect, in the latter part of my incumbency, when the average number of the class was 250. Besides the 25 regular monitors, the next 23 boys, forming the *first*, *second*, and part of the *third* divisions, were appointed *pro tempore* monitors, and, taking their places each at the head of a division, proceeded to go over the lessons of the day before; while the regular monitors, whose mastery of the old lesson could not be doubted, were taken apart into an adjoining room, and strictly

examined by me on the new lessons of the day. As such pupils are quick of apprehension, a summary short-hand way was enough to put them speedily and fully in possession of the lesson, and of all I wished to be taught to, and impressed upon, the boys in division; and being thus charged with the necessary knowledge, they took off their several ways, to distribute it over the minds of their school-fellows; the deputy monitors meanwhile resuming their ordinary places, and reporting at the end of the hour, how the old lesson had been said.

But, now that I have described the principal modes of employing this educational instrument, it is natural to enquire, how its efficiency was to be maintained, and how the mischievous tendencies which it is easy to prognosticate and denounce were to be guarded against.

The natural indolence of the human mind, it may be argued, and its aversion to follow a continued train of thought in a line prescribed, will suggest to boys thus withdrawn from the direct superintendence of the master, a thousand ways of defeating his purpose, and indulging those propensities of their nature. It must often happen, it may be thought, that by mutual compact between the monitor and the pupils, the lessons will be slurred over and imperfectly said, nay, often neglected altogether, and the time furtively occupied in trifling, or in telling stories. The monitors, again, if you arm them with too much power, will abuse it, and become partial, capricious, and tyrannical; if with too little, they will be despised, and the division will fall into confusion and suffer all the evils of anarchy. There

may be encouragement, also, some will think, to the indolence of a master, in the facility and the temptation he will have, to shift the burden of teaching from his own shoulders to those of his monitors.

These are all dangers to which it was not difficult to foresee that the new plan was exposed. It was in truth no more than being aware, that methods of teaching, like machinery, however well contrived and conducted, cannot be expected to work effectually without a system of checks and balances, as well as a moving power; and that constant vigilance is required to prevent the whole from going out of order.

They are all dangers, too, which turned out formidable realities, in the large schools for the children of the poorer classes, formed under the auspices of Dr. Bell and of Mr. Lancaster. For, great as was the impression made on the public mind by their promulgation and first application of the method of mutual instruction, and manifold as were the benefits which it conferred on the commonalty of England for many years subsequent to the enthusiasm created by its first introduction, it was nevertheless easy to see, that the organization established by them, when contemplated as a permanent system of popular instruction, contained within itself the seeds of decay and dissolution. The children on whom the experiment was tried sprang from a class of parents, who more frequently counteracted than assisted the good lessons received at school; their home-training was always imperfect and often positively bad; their attendance was irregular; they were too young to be trusted with delegated authority; and, worst of all, those who, from age, ability, and trustworthiness, were

the fittest for monitorial duties, were, for that very reason, withdrawn by their parents, to be put to some gainful employment. There is besides a constantly increasing difficulty, in finding trained and intelligent masters.\* Among the boys I had to deal with, I found no such elements of mischief, no such tendency to degenerate; but quite the reverse. From year to year, up to the last of my rectorship, the system became more and more efficient; nor is it difficult to account for the contrast. The constituent members of the Rector's class were the sons of parents of a higher grade than those of the Bell and Lancaster children; they had been accustomed to obedience and school-discipline for several years; and they were of an age when not only is the intellect more developed, but the finer feelings and higher principles of our nature begin to emerge, and it becomes possible to appeal successfully to the sense of honour and propriety,—a mighty engine for good, in hands that know how to use it. I hold it to be clearly demonstrable, by reason no less than from my own experience, that the monitorial method is more applicable, and may be applied with a greater certainty of good results, in schools of large numbers, where the higher branches of knowledge are taught to advanced pupils, than it is

\* These disturbing influences, observable enough at the date of my manuscript (1823), became at last so apparent and so subversive of the ends in view, that the Committee of Privy Council on Education were induced to supersede the plan of mutual instruction as hitherto practised in schools receiving pecuniary aid from Parliamentary grants, and to substitute for their *monitors*, what are called *apprenticed teachers*. The change was a wise and judicious one, and is producing the very best effects.

to the immature, unformed, and often ill-conditioned minds of the offspring of the humbler classes.

Accordingly, when, in consequence of the increasing numbers in the Rector's class, it was thought by the patrons of the school that it must become unmanageable in the hands of one man, I was given to understand, in a private communication from one of the most influential members of the municipal body, that if I made a formal application to the Town Council for a paid assistant, it would be favourably listened to. I declined doing so, on the ground that I had already secured the services of twenty unpaid assistants of my own training, and more if I wanted them, in whom I had greater confidence than I was likely to feel in a hired one.

The opinion I have stated as demonstrable receives no small confirmation from a fact, which has never been even alluded to in the public discussion of the question. It is this, that a practice, much akin to monitorial discipline and based upon the same principle, subsisted, for many generations before Bell and Lancaster were born, at Eton, Rugby, and other great schools coeval almost with the monarchy, which have been resorted to for ages by the youth of the best blood that England has to boast of. I allude to the institution of Prepostors, who, being themselves pupils in the highest forms of those schools, are invested with delegated authority, and exercise it over their school-fellows, in a way which may be called the moral police of the establishment. They are not employed, as my monitors were, in teaching, or in what the French schoolmasters call *répétition*, but they are officers of discipline; and, in the hands of such men as Dr. Arnold,

they were organs of an influence, both moral and intellectual, which extended, not only to the regulation of the school games, but to the repressing, by impositions, and in the lower school even by corporal inflictions, of misdemeanours, breaches of the laws of the school, and offences against good manners or gentlemanlike conduct.

Let us hear no more, then, of the monitorial discipline, as of 'a thing that has been tried and found wanting,'—as 'a popular delusion which has had its day, and is fast passing into oblivion,'—so long as the method has never been tried, fully or generally, in that department of education where its capabilities are greatest, and in which it is the object of this book to prove that it has once at least been tried with success. That in the great English Schools it has been employed only as a sort of watch and ward over conduct, and not for literary training as well as school-discipline, is owing chiefly, I apprehend, to the constitution of those establishments, where the boys are under the superintendence of the masters, out of school as well as in it. But in both, *the principle is the same*,—the delegation of authority to one set of present pupils, to be exercised over their fellows who are less advanced in age and standing.

To those who are still sceptical as to the applicability of monitorial discipline to the teaching of Greek, Latin, and the cognate branches, and who regard as Utopian any project for rendering such application general, there is one concession which I am not only willing to make, but anxious to proclaim. I fully admit the possibility of combining it with the old and inveterate habit of objurgation, coercion, and corporal

punishment. To give the monitorial method a fair chance of success, there must be a feeling of kindness and confidence between master and scholar, which can only spring up in the breast of a boy, from a strong conviction that his teacher is also his friend, and wishes to be of use to him. Between him and his monitors, above all, there must be a sentiment of mutual respect and regard. His intercourse with them must be such as to impart the feeling that they are his fellow-workers in a great cause. Whatever their previous habits and manners may have been, he must treat them as gentlemen, and they will speedily become so. As boy-nature, then, however individual characters may differ, is everywhere alike, it is upon the teacher that the responsibility rests of carrying out the principle rightly into practice. One successful experiment, upon a great scale, is good in argument against a thousand failures.

It was vain, however, I was well aware, to hope for success, without anticipating, and providing against, all the chances of failure. In education, as in every human institution, we must be content to take account both of advantages and inconveniences, and to abide by the result which gives the largest balance of benefits.

Let us then trace the working of the system on the two component parts of the class,—the monitors, and the divisions. The monitors had numerous and strong inducements to perform their part ably and conscientiously. There was implied in the duty enjoined more than an accidental and ephemeral connection. They were appointed, each to a particular division, for a fortnight at least, and were bound at the end



of that time to give in a general statement in writing, of the manner in which the lessons had been said during their time of office, and lists of the Division as it stood when they received it, and as it stood when they resigned it: a list too of those boys who had fallen to a lower division, or risen to a higher, or passed through from more remote divisions upwards or downwards. To secure the means of making such accurate returns, there was required a habit of strict and unremitted attention. Any inaccuracy seldom failed to be detected and exposed when the master came to read out publicly the conclusions he had come to from the inspection of the final reports. It was gratifying to a monitor when a member of his division took a higher place in the examination of the assembled class; and part of the honour redounded to him, if a considerable number had done so. If he were imperfectly acquainted with the lesson himself, two consequences were likely to follow, both of which he held in abhorrence,—exposure of his ignorance, and loss of place. For he well knew, that after the divisions broke up and the class was re-assembled, there would be a general invitation to those to stand up who had an appeal to make against the monitor for a mistranslation, either committed by him or allowed to pass uncorrected in the division. On such occasions, four or five appellants generally rose, and the monitor of their respective divisions rose at the same time; and if any of them made his point good against the monitor, (and the arguing of such points was an instructive and amusing exercise,) he rose *ipso facto* to the head of his division, and

the monitor lost a place to the next below him, against whom no appeal had been made.

To ensure the unceasing operation of the principle of generous emulation, the monitor was armed with the power of 'putting up or down,' that is, of making boys gain or lose places as they acquitted themselves well or ill; and the place they gained in the division they retained in the general class. This power may be thought a dangerous prerogative; and it would have led infallibly to abuse and favouritism, had it not been kept in check by permitting the *right of appeal*. With the fear of appeal before his eyes, favouritism on the part of a monitor was impossible, and careless preparation nearly so. The division was a sort of jury, whose verdict, expressed or understood, was itself a bar to unfairness; but the grand preventive of all tendency to indulge partialities or dislikes, was the pupil's right of appeal to the master himself. This right was sometimes exercised in the division, as I went my rounds, and decided there, if it regarded merely the loss of a place or the value of a slight correction. If it involved a nicer and important question about the sense and construction, the appellant was advised to reserve it for a hearing in the presence of all. Again, if there was any unnecessary delay in proceeding with the business prescribed, arising from idle talk or telling stories, it was sure to be detected, either by the master himself or by a trustworthy general monitor, whose business it was to go round the divisions and note irregularities. The truth is, that as all the divisions advanced at a pretty equable pace, any one division being greatly behind,

led to an immediate investigation, and the truth never failed to come out. The temptation to idleness was doubtless greatest in the rooms where the master was not present at the time,\* and idleness was more difficult of detection there, as on the least hint of the master's approach all was silence and apparent attention. A case or two of this kind having come to my knowledge, I availed myself of certain openings in the ceiling, which had been made to promote ventilation, and employed them for a very different purpose. Mounting to the garrets, with which these apertures communicated, I was enabled to view what was passing in the room below, without being visible myself. So good was the conduct of the divisions, that I long looked in vain for any overt act. At last the temptation of a longer than usual absence elicited one or two frivolities. To the utter consternation of the guilty, I told them minutely what they had been about; and, with these witnesses to vouch to their school-fellows for the fact, I publicly and good-humouredly announced the means I had of detection; and this invisible agency had so powerful and permanent an effect, that I had seldom or never occasion to employ it again.

To prevent loss of time in unprofitable discussion or wrangling about places, the monitors were empowered and enjoined to put a stop to these, by saying to the next boy, "Go on," and referring the complainer to me if he chose.

As to the danger to the Monitor of conceit, which might be apprehended from his being thus dressed in a little brief authority, it exists nowhere but in the ima-

\* There was a suite of three rooms on the floor.

gination of the theorist. Any tendency to such a fault was speedily counteracted, by the feeling of severe responsibility, by the number of persons who enjoyed the same distinction, and by the absolute equality which the monitor's fellows vindicated for themselves the moment they were out of school. The apprehension is equally groundless, that the seeds would be sown of jealousy and ill-will towards the monitors. When a monitor's conduct was fair, manly, conciliatory, and yet firm, no feeling of that sort ever prevailed; and if it was not so, some manifestation of such feeling was no bad means of correcting his faults, provided the master acted his part well in applying the remedy.

All these preventive checks on monitors and pupils, require to be watched and enforced by the master himself, who, so far from being relieved of duty when the divisions are formed, ought to consider that as the busiest, and not the least important portion of his whole day. It is then that he feels a desire, as it were, to multiply himself, that he may hear and see what is going on everywhere. At no time is his post less of a sinecure. The divisions are, indeed, to him a sort of Normal School, where the best means are afforded him of studying the nature of boys, and the motives that actuate them, and of making himself acquainted with the individual characters of his pupils, with a view to improve them. He is the last resort in all appeal cases; and appeals, being made not merely against monitors, but more frequently when monitors decline to decide, often involve points of considerable nicety and novelty, which nothing but long habit can enable the teacher himself to deter-

mine on the spur of the occasion, as satisfactorily and speedily as the urgency requires. The moments of interval from this duty he employs in attaching himself, now to one division, now to another, observing the manner in which the business is conducted, forming a judgment by comparison of the different monitors, commending the pupils who do their tasks well, and enquiring into the causes of failure. At another time, he is examining slips of paper sent in by the monitors, containing the names of those who failed in the lesson, and, from his previous knowledge of the habits, abilities, and opportunities of his pupils, he is taking hints from the returns, to admonish one privately, to reprove another in the presence of his division, and to put a third to open shame, by calling upon him to construe in the general class.

One of Lancaster's absurdities was his maintaining, that a school arranged on his principle was like a clock wound up, which would go of itself. Without thinking worse of boy nature than he did, I deemed it as well not to tempt it beyond what it might be able to bear. Once or twice I made successful experiments in this way, but always found that things went on the better, the more vigilant the superintendence; and when exhaustion or slight indisposition led to a little relaxation on my part, I have often felt

Non aliter, quàm qui adverso vix flumine lembum  
Remigiis subigit, si brachia forte remisit,  
Atque illum in præceps prono rapit alveus amni.

In truth, what the poet says in the same passage, of the vegetable world and its habits, is equally true of the moral and intellectual,—

Vidi lecta diu et multo spectata labore  
Degenerare tamen, ni vis humana quotannis  
Maxima quæque manu legeret :—sic omnia fatis  
In pejus ruere et retro sublapsa referri.\*

HAVING explained the organization of monitorial tuition, as adopted in the Rector's class in 1811 and subsequently modified, the manner of its application, and the checks and securities taken against abuse, it remains to point out the advantages accruing from this method, as compared with the mode formerly in use.

It will, I presume, be admitted on all hands that, supposing the literary acquirements upon either system to be in the end equal, the preference is due to that method which accomplishes its end with the smallest amount of annoyance and privation to the learner. There are indeed schoolmasters, and fathers too I fear, who act towards the young persons committed to their care, as if they looked upon brow-beating and blows as an indispensable and beneficial part of their training. For myself, when I reflect how considerable a portion of our brief span of life is spent in school, and at an age when novelty gives a zest to enjoyment, I cannot but regard it as a question of some interest, whether it shall be passed in active and happy exertion, or in a state of uneasiness and depression, which makes the associations with a school-room to differ but little from those of a prison-house. But when it is further considered, that the manner in which that period of boyhood is spent materially affects the moral habits of the man, to say nothing of his intellect ; that there is nothing so debasing, nothing so souring to the temper and destruc-

\* Virg. Georg. I. 197.

tive of good feeling, as to be treated with unkindness and subjected to alternations of listlessness and corporal suffering,—it becomes still more important that the ends of public education should be obtained, with the least possible imposition of hardship, or infliction of pain that savours of injustice. On what plea, or in virtue of what right, does a full-grown man arrest the young of his species, who hold life and liberty by a charter from nature herself, immure them in a school-room, subject them there to the control of another, and condemn them for hours together to the irksomeness of bodily inaction; and that, at a time of life when the increasing vigour of their muscular frame fits and disposes them to enjoy a wild and active independence? If such a question were asked, it might be answered, and satisfactorily answered, that reason and experience prove the necessity, on a fair calculation of the chances of human life, of evolving certain faculties, and inducing certain habits, the existence and exercise of which are indispensable for securing even a moderate amount of happiness and usefulness in the world; and that these ends are never so attainable as in boyhood, though not even then without a considerable abridgment of natural liberty. But the very terms of the answer imply, that the amount of constraint, privation, and infliction, which natural law and common sense permit to be interposed, ought to be precisely the smallest that is consistent with the full accomplishment of the end proposed. Yet so little is this principle understood or acknowledged, that hardship and coercion are too often deemed *per se* a blessing to youth. Masters, it is thought, may err in the number and severity of their stripes, but it is always a

comfort to think, that the boys will be all the better for it. To reprobate such notions and practices, is not to plead for a delicate and over-indulgent treatment. On the contrary, my prime object was to stimulate to strenuous exertion and patient industry, and to form habits of continued and accurate thinking. But I conceived that this intense exercise of the faculties, which boys cannot reach by their unassisted efforts, is itself a state of happiness and enjoyment, when they are guided to it by a judicious and affectionate hand.

The effects produced by the introduction of the method which has been explained, were alike beneficial to the monitor and to the pupil.

1. On the old plan of teaching, the motive which the head-boys had for attending to the business in hand was never very strong, and was almost entirely withdrawn after the first construing. The rest of the time was spent by them either in a dreamy kind of listlessness, or in practising all manner of school-boy tricks and frivolities, till, encouraged by impunity to greater audacity, the noise and disturbance rose at length to a pitch that attracted the master's notice, and a scold or the lash produced a temporary suspension of mischievous activity. But no sooner is a head-boy invested with the responsibility of the monitorial office, than a desire springs up, not to expose himself, by want of the lesson, to the contempt of the better prepared in his division, and to the animadversion of his master. If he be ignorant, he can no longer flatter himself that his ignorance will remain undetected. He is impelled by the strongest motives, not only to learn at home, but to give attention to whatever he hears in the class that may rectify



and confirm his acquaintance with the lesson, knowing that it will soon be required at his hands. Thus love of distinction combines with dread of exposure, to rivet his attention on all that is passing, up to the moment the divisions are formed ; and when that moment arrives, other duties devolve upon him, which subject him to a discipline not less important as a preparation for life than any learning he can acquire. He may go to his division in perfect possession of the lesson ; yet, if he be deficient in command of temper, in firmness of purpose, in rigorous impartiality, in sound judgment and discretion, in promptitude of decision, and in conscientious principle, the deficiency will soon be apparent, and he will lose proportionally in the estimation of his comrades. Here, then, while he is dispensing knowledge to others, he is himself put, as it were, to a preparatory school of human life, where he is trained, by the most cogent motives that can act on the mind of ingenuous youth, to curb his passions and regulate his temper, and where he acquires the rudiments of the moral and intellectual habits which are most essential to the character of a respectable citizen and a happy man. To secure this result more certainly, I did not always adhere to the rule of appointing a monitor to the division corresponding to his number from the head of the class, but contrived matters so that, in the course of the year, the head boys should successively act as monitors in different divisions, in order that every pupil might have an opportunity of comparing and judging of their respective merits at the close of the year ; and sometimes a prize was awarded by the votes of the class to him who was thought by the majority to have

acted his part best as monitor. So much for the effect of sub-division on the head-boys who acted as teachers.

2. If we consider, again, its effect on the great body of the taught, we shall find equal reason to think well of it. In a numerous class the principle of emulation acts very feebly, particularly among the lower boys, where its influence is most desirable. Its force may be estimated as in the inverse ratio of a boy's distance from the top; and after the first thirty or forty places below that elevation, it ceases to be a motive of very abiding strength, till, as we approach the lower region, it disappears entirely, or is perceived only in momentary flashes which soon relapse into apathy. In a class of 250, or even half that number, so long as a boy can measure his place in the class only by his numerical distance from the unattainable height of *dux*, what can it matter to him whether he stand 210th or 211th? nay, is there anything to stir his ambition, ensure his attention, or keep him from his play, when the only question is, whether among the nineties he shall be the first or the last?

But the monitorial sub-division introduced an entirely new element into a boy's calculation. When he felt himself but as one atom of an immense whole, he may have looked to the top of the class with despair, and to his own place in it with indifference: but in a division, he found himself matched against eight of his equals, and to be *dux* (a magical word in a boy's ear) in his own division, seemed an elevation quite within his reach. Accordingly, if there were a spark of emulation within him, it was elicited by that prospect. Nor was there any chance of the spark

being quenched by his reaching the head of his division and remaining there; for if he did so for two days successively, he acquired a right to take his seat on the third day in the division above; and if he gained places there, he remained permanently in the higher division, and the lowest boy went to supply his place in that which he had left. It is needless to say that the same motive urged him upwards in his new position; and thus it not unfrequently happened, that a boy who had entered the lowest in the class at the commencement worked his way to the summit. And this upward movement it was easy to accelerate by questions proposed in the assembled class. On the other hand, a boy who remained *lag* of his division for a certain time, was liable to be thrown off to the division below, and supplanted by the highest boy there.

These arrangements made it unnecessary and inexpedient to adopt the large divisions of 36 each, so strenuously recommended to me by the late Dr. Bell, and the want of which made him eye all else in my class with indifference. It is quite possible, that, in the ordinary schools on the plan of mutual instruction, the larger number may be found more effectual in keeping alive the principle of emulation than the number 10, but it should be remembered that my entire class was in truth a division of 250, in a school of 800; and that my *decads* were mere convenient and ready contrivances for enabling merit to rise to its level. In this point of view, they were, I conceive, decidedly preferable to larger subdivisions, because in the latter, a boy might linger a long time; while in one of ten, his hopes of rising were kept continually alive; and the principle of emulation was

so equally and universally diffused, that I have repeatedly seen tears come into the eyes of a member of the lowest division upon the loss of a place, and have often wished I could make a boy lose *half a place*, so intense was his regret at the loss of a whole one.

No sooner was this new organization in full operation, than the change of feeling was manifested by the very outward appearance of the boys. Instead of the languor and relaxed features, the lounging and collapsed state of body, into which a boy naturally sinks when compelled to remain long in the same position with nothing to interest him, the attitude was erect, the countenance full of animation and alacrity, and the eye, that used to be either expressive of weariness or exchanging significant looks and stolen glances with its partners in mischief, was open as day and beaming with intelligence. The very act of locomotion, at the forming of divisions, was an unspeakable relief both to mind and body; to the mind, by breaking the dull monotony of repeated and unvaried construing; and to the body, by removing that strain on one set of muscles and total inaction of another, which creates so strong a feeling of fatigue.\* The diligent boy was cheered by the prospect of never labouring in vain, while the certainty of being called to say, and being reported upon, kept the idler in check. *Fervet opus*; a buzz or subdued noise prevailed, very unlike the profound silence maintained in the assembled class, but it was the hum of business; and though the unaccustomed ear of an occasional visitor

\* Hence a strong argument for going into divisions every meeting, two hours being rather too long for boys, especially very young ones, to sit in one attitude.

might be offended by the confusion of tongues, every boy was attending only to that part of it which concerned himself. The ardour of the pupils was apt to raise the tone of speaking, and snatches of sound rose now and then above the rest in the keenness of contention; but it was easy for the master to regulate all this. When the eagerness of competition made the noise too great, a signal produced silence, and the business recommenced in a subdued tone.

One of the difficulties to contend with in giving full efficacy to the monitorial system, was to ensure from the monitors a strict and faithful report of delinquencies. Where power is delegated, it must always be, to a certain extent, discretionary: and in the case of monitors it is desirable it should be so, to prevent perpetual reference to the master on every minute point. In regard to the lessons, the danger is that the monitor will conceal, in his written return, the poor appearances of some of his division; and he may do so, either from good nature and facility of disposition, or from particular favour towards an individual. As this is a failing that leans to the side of mercy, it is not a subject of much regret if it cannot be entirely removed, particularly as it shews itself only in occasional aberrations. There were abundant checks, however, upon inaccurate reports, in the unremitting observation and vigilance of the master, who called up, in the general class, those most likely to be unprepared, and thus confronted them as it were with the monitor's return,—in the jealousy of the division itself, which would not submit to any flagrant instance, either of culpable lenity or undue partiality,—and finally, in a feeling which prevailed

among the monitors themselves, that they were bound to the fearless deliverance of an unbiassed opinion, and that to do otherwise would be a breach of confidence, indicating either dishonesty or cowardice. With such a feeling it is not difficult for a master to imbue his pupils by a few words of occasional exhortation, by recommending them to take for their motto—"Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur,"\*—and above all, by proving that he acts always on that principle himself.†

\* *Æn.* i. 574.

† Among those of my readers who have had the courage and patience to go through the details of this long chapter, there may be some who feel interest enough in the subject to desire further information, and others, who, being accustomed to look on the dark side of boy-nature, may be disposed to regard what they have read as the sanguine views of a visionary projector. To both I would recommend the perusal of two papers, which Dr. Steven has inserted in his *History of the High School*, (pp. 173 and 195). They appear to have originated, like my own Notes, from a wish to retain a memorial of school-days. The writers were both head-boys of the school and Medallists in the Rector's class; the one at the time when monitorial discipline was first thought of, there; the other, ten years after, when it had been brought to the state in which I left it (1820). Both have predeceased their teacher,—*quod contra decuit*, as Cato says of his dead son; \*—and this must be my apology for referring to documents which, when their old master is spoken of, the warmth of youthful feeling and affection has coloured too highly.

\* *Cujus a me corpus crematum est ; quod contra decuit ab illo meum.*—Cic. de Senect. cap. xxxiii.

## CHAPTER II.

### ABOLITION OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENTS.

Maxima debetur puero reverentia—*Juv.* xiv, 47.

THE adoption of the monitorial method presented great facilities for diminishing and finally abolishing the use of the rod. That mode of discipline I found firmly established in all the five classes; rarely indeed to the extent *nudandi inter cives corpora*,\* but to the full length of frequent and angry inflictions. The recollection of what I had myself witnessed in my boyhood, and my knowledge of well-attested instances not yet wholly forgotten of extreme severities practised in former periods of High School history, made me earnestly desirous to diminish, and if possible to root out altogether in my own class, a practice so servile and degrading; not doubting that its extirpation there, would at least lessen its frequency in the other classes.

The arrangements and mode of procedure in our public seminaries in Scotland had made the use of the rod as an instrument of discipline peculiarly liable to abuse. In most of the great schools of England, several classes or forms are taught by their respective masters, at the same time and in the same apartment. This arrangement, though not without its inconveniences, as I shall afterwards shew, has this eminent

\* Cicero.

advantage, that as the masters teach in presence of each other, they are under a control which checks violent paroxysms of anger. The indulgence of passion or ill-humour at the expense of the pupil is still farther guarded against by the regulation, that the same master who awards the penalty is not permitted to inflict it. His power extends no farther than to insert the culprit's name in a list which is handed over to the head master, and he it is who administers the punishment. Now, as he is not the person directly offended, it is not likely he should be influenced by passion or overdo the castigation. According to our Scottish system, on the other hand, each class was taught in a separate room by a single master, unrestrained by the presence of his equals in age, and, as far as regards his conduct to his pupils, amenable to no tribunal but his own conscience and public opinion. The former of these a man of irritable temper contrives easily to silence, and the latter he does his best to defy or elude, by making it a point of honour with his boys not to tell at home what happened in the school-room. In such circumstances, where the master is at once party, judge, and executioner, where there is no court of review, and no liberty of appeal, it is alike contrary to reason and experience to expect that abuses will not creep in, so long as corporal punishment is the chief means of enforcing silence and attention. Nothing, in school as elsewhere, is so corrupting to the possessor as irresponsible power. The problem of wise legislation, in schools as in kingdoms, cannot be considered as solved, till such checks and limitations be established as shall take from the depository of power all temptation to do, and all means of doing, any thing



but good. Accordingly, if the secrets of the prison-house were disclosed, the annals of the High School, in going back to the last century, and within the memory of many now living (1823), might furnish tales of inexcusable severity, and even wanton cruelty, which the milder maxims and perfect publicity of the present day make almost incredible.

It is not, indeed, easy to conceive how, upon the old system, a master can avoid having recourse to the lash. The uninteresting nature of the business, and the discomfort of sitting long in one posture, a thing unnatural at that age, produce a sensation of ennui so overpowering, that the poor boy is driven for relief to restlessness, loquacity, and all manner of unprofitable activity. While he is suffering under this physical uneasiness and trying to get rid of it, it is vain to talk to him of the duty of attending to his book, or even to threaten him with coming vengeance; nothing but the actual descent of the rod will avail. Even that is soon forgotten. To many boys of firm nerve and inextinguishable muscular mobility, corporal suffering is more tolerable than the constraint and torpor to which they are condemned. There is, besides, a certain glory in bearing stripes without flinching; and though this indifference to pain has generally the effect of provoking the master to heavier infliction, yet with his school-fellows the sufferer is a hero. It is, indeed, no small aggravation of the charges against the rod as an instrument of discipline, that it confers a sort of distinction on the greatest dolts and idlers, and elevates them among their fellows above the clever and well-behaved, whose more sensitive natures shrink from these barbarities,

and are apt to betray more reluctance to submit to them than their comrades can well sympathize with. Besides, as the delinquent's offence is more heinous in the eyes of the master than in those of his scholars, a reaction takes place, in favour of the sufferer and against the inflicter, which is fatal to that mutual respect and good understanding, which never fail to exist when the discipline is good, and without which, indeed, no discipline can be perfect. The English penal code, which makes the head-master the general executioner, alleviates, but by no means removes the evil.

All my experience leads me to dissent from an opinion, which passes with many on both sides of the Tweed for an acknowledged truth, that a competent knowledge of Greek and Latin can only be secured to a boy by *flogging it into him*. Can it be, one might ask on hearing this proposition, can it be, that when mental labour and continuous exertion are required of the youthful mind, there is no purer principle to appeal to, no stronger motive to work upon, than the slavish fear of the lash? The finer specimens of the brute creation even—the dog and the horse—feel and resent the indignity of the scourge; a kind word and look, or the *plausæ sonitus cervicis*,\* act on them more effec-

\* Virg. Georg. iii. 185.—The poet recommends that the war-horse be taught—

— magis atque magis blandis gaudere magistri  
Laudibus, et plausæ sonitum cervicis amare :

Indifferently translated by Sotheby—

“ Teach him to love thy praise, and proudly stand,  
And arch his crest beneath thy flattering hand :”

Better perhaps by Delille—

Au seul son de ta voix que son allégresse éclate,  
Qu'il frémissé au doux bruit de la main qui le flatte.

tually than the whip or the spur ; and shall the youth of our own species, long after they have passed the breaking-in of childhood, be treated worse than we treat beasts of burden ? Surely not !—not, at least, till we have had recourse to every other less clumsy expedient and less humiliating stimulus. No teacher is entitled to answer in the affirmative the questions I have put, who has not made a study of the youthful mind and of the motives that sway it, and who has not modesty and self-diffidence enough to lead him to suspect, that when things go amiss in the school-room, the fault may be in himself more than in his pupils.\*

\* Five or six years after I had written these Notes and Recollections of the High School, I made a tour among schools in some of the southern counties of Scotland and the north of Ireland ; and to shew that subsequent experience and observation had not then altered my opinion on the subject of corporal punishment, or diminished my dislike of the Tawse, I subjoin the following passages from a little volume which that tour of inspection gave birth to :

“ The lash is a bad instrument of discipline, even were it possible to ensure the application of it according to a graduated scale, and with an intensity actually corresponding to the aggravation of the offence. It is bad, because it humbles, degrades, and lays prostrate the understanding of the sufferer,—because it establishes disagreeable and disgusting associations with the business of mental cultivation,—because, however equally the stripes may be doled out in number and severity, they affect very differently different tempers, and are felt most acutely by those least deserving of punishment,—because they make a hero, in the eyes of his school-fellows, of the most hardened offender,—because the infliction of them, with its usual accompaniments, consumes time unprofitably,—and because, however administered, they have a tendency to estrange the pupil, not from his books only, but also from his teacher. These exceptions may be taken against the lash, even when used with the

THE monitorial arrangement having infused fresh life and spirit into every part of the class, I found so copious a stock of honourable motives at my disposal,

strictest and most passionless impartiality. But, to secure a fair and even-handed distribution of stripes, two masters at least would be required, one to pass sentence, and another to approve and carry it into effect. For we all know the corrupting influence of power, privilege, and authority, and how few minds, naturally and habitually good, are able to resist it, even when they act in the eye of their fellow-men. How much more liable, then, is power to be abused, when the possessor is left to exercise it over helpless children, with no witnesses but them, and under the stimulus of frequent provocation! Though corporal punishment, therefore, were liable to none of the weighty objections which I have urged against it even when dispensed according to the exactest rule of proportion, still it would be a dangerous instrument to trust in the hands of any man who unites in himself the legislative and executive character,—who is at once counsel, judge, (jury there is none,) and executioner; and very generally, prosecutor also.' . . . .

"That satisfaction should be felt by a teacher who uses the rod freely, is quite in the order of nature. Not to mention the extreme proneness to make a bad use of power, which in all ages has been common to masters of schools and of kingdoms, there is much in the peculiar position of such a teacher to nourish the diseased appetite into portentous voracity. He sets out, as it is manifest this schoolmaster does, on the principle, that there is no effectual access to the understanding of a child but through bodily pain,—that in the very porch and vestibule of knowledge,—*vestibulum ante ipsum primoque in limine*—

'Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ:'

And it is an obvious inference from his principle, that he is performing a duty when he inflicts the pain.

"Let us suppose, then, that the object of his tender mercies is a timid boy, who resists the unseemly exposure of his person, or, by an involuntary movement, which he repeats more than once, withdraws his hand from the lash as it descends with a nicely adjusted momentum: it cannot, in such a case, be matter of surprise, that the baffled wielder of the rod should wax more and more wroth

that there was no temptation to employ brute force. Seeds of generous emulation, love of approbation, dislike of blame, desire of distinction, and fear of exposure, existed, no doubt, before in the minds of the pupils ; but they were imperfectly and fitfully deve-

every time he misses his aim *et verberat ictibus auras* ; and, when he has succeeded, by more fearful threats, or by some mechanical contrivance, in fixing the hand and hitting his mark, we need not wonder if the blow descend with a weight and velocity inversely proportioned to the reason and justice of the case. If, on the other hand, the firmer nerve or more resolute temper of another culprit enables him to bear the pain without flinching, and, while the blows descend like hail, to stand unmoved—the admiration of his school-fellows ; no one will think it unnatural that, in the master's mind, the excitement of the moment should convert this very fortitude into an aggravation of the original offence ; and that, feeling a sort of personal interest in subduing such obstinacy, and in vindicating the omnipotence of the rod, he should grasp more vigorously the *caducum fulmen*, and arm it with all its terrors. Nay more, it can scarcely surprise us, if a certain manual dexterity in flourishing the lash, and laying in the blows so as to *tell*, should be found to constitute a part of the flagellant's gratification ; or, if a successful administration of the *condign*, (to use a slang word of the tribe,) with its proper accompaniments of howling and writhing, should affect him with a self-gratulation somewhat akin to that which a sportsman feels, when he brings down a bird of a distant covey with his fowling-piece."—*Principles of Elementary Teaching, &c.* 2d Edition, pp. 24 and 142–144 ; Edinburgh ; Adam Black ; 1829.

And now, in 1851, after a still longer interval of observation, I profess my adherence to the doctrine of the text, with the following qualification, which is only a fuller expression of what is admitted in the volume just quoted from :

I would not be understood as affirming, that the schoolmaster will never meet with boys who seem utterly inaccessible to the motives and influences which act upon the bulk of mankind. There are, it would appear, mal-conformations of conscience and intellect, as well as of physical structure, in the human subject. Without

loped; whereas they were now in constant and vigorous operation. So abundant were the means of animating and repressing, that recourse to more unworthy stimulants and correctives was at last found altogether unnecessary.

For the right use and application of these ample means, prudence and discretion are doubtless required in a public teacher. He must neither squander nor hoard his capital, but practise that even economy of praise and blame, reward and punishment, which is not the least important lesson he has to teach himself. Whether in commending or reproving, he should cautiously select the most appropriate and well-weighed expressions. If the word be always suited to the action, and every gradation on the side of merit and demerit be candidly and distinctly characterized by the terms employed, and by the tone and look with which they are delivered, such an ascendancy may be gained over the minds of youth, that a word or significant gesture will have more weight and make a deeper impression, than angry expostulation or heavy blows. Praise and blame, when sparingly and judiciously

stopping to inquire whether such mental misdirection be owing to nature or bad training, I see no reason why these anomalous varieties of the species should not, by way of giving them a last chance of amendment, be subjected to the treatment we apply to a vicious or ill-broken horse. Examples have occurred within my own knowledge, of cases where a boy, deaf to the voice of reason and kindly remonstrance, and apparently without the moral sense, has, after resisting all other means, been brought to a better mind by the solemn, severe, and passionless use of the rod. But every schoolmaster should act on the conviction, that such cases are not more frequent in man's mental constitution, than is congenital distortion of the feet in his bodily frame.

dealt out, are engines of incalculable power. But, on the other hand, if a master, for some trifling misdemeanour, pour forth a volley of abusive epithets, he has nothing, of course, in reserve for heinous offences but flagellation; and if, on the other hand, he be either extravagant or partial in his commendation, it will have little or no value.

I would push the economy of praise and reproof so far as to pitch the tone of both a note or two below the natural scale. This is a useful rule in commending, because it enhances the value of a strong expression. But it is in reprimand and punishment that its importance is best seen, though I fear I must add, in practice least understood. There prevails among schoolmasters such a dread of relaxing wholesome discipline, that, when a public example is to be made, even the most temperate and conscientious think themselves called upon to colour the offence a little highly, and to express even more indignation against the culprit than they actually feel. This I conceive to be a capital blunder. The very reverse of it is a great secret in the management of youth. No infliction can benefit the sufferer, or serve as a warning to others, which is not felt and acknowledged to be just by the great body of his school-fellows. The moment it exceeds the measure which the impartial spectator can sympathize with, it generates compassion for the offender, and dislike of the punisher. And if such injustice be often repeated, scholar is arrayed against master, and a hostile feeling is produced which is ever ready to betray itself, if not in open rebellion, at least in every kind of thwarting and vexatious annoyance. The boy most ingenious and successful in

mischievous devices, which his fellows think no more than acts of just retribution, is a general favourite; the breach between the boys and their teacher becomes wider and wider, and ends at last in a sort of guerilla warfare, in which the adverse parties are both busy in devising means, the one to do what is prohibited, and the other to prevent it.

On the other hand, there is nothing that so completely disarms the bad and unsocial passions of a boy as kindness; nothing so popular as stopping short of the severity which strict justice might award. Nor will such forbearance, if it appear to flow from enlightened principle and affection, ever tempt to a repetition of the offence. If a low rate of punishment is found to increase the frequency of sinning, it is only where it is not systematic but capricious, and is either known to proceed from that excessive facility of nature which invites delinquency and insult, or appears to result from the apprehension of resistance and rebellion. Extreme moderation is especially advisable when the offence has the semblance of being committed against something said or done by the master himself, and may be construed into a personal insult to him. It is in such cases, when more than ordinary anger and vengeance are expected, and are thought, from what boys feel in their own breasts, to be natural, that they are most surprised and most captivated by acts of forgiveness.\* Then is the time to state calmly the nature of the offence, in strong but temperate language; to explain the principles on which it ought to be condemned and reprobated, but at the same time to find some alleviating circumstance, either

\* See Note A. at the end of the volume.



in the offender's ignorance or thoughtlessness ; or at the worst, to rally him good-humouredly, and perhaps raise a smile (it should never be a laugh) among his fellows at his expense. The effect of this manner of treating a misdemeanour is electrical : the boys immediately range themselves on the master's side. They feel as if he had done a magnanimous thing ; and if there be any touch of meanness or ill-breeding in the conduct of the culprit, they will take justice, as it were, into their own hands, and will teaze and torment him out of school. I have more than once been obliged to interfere between the offender and his indignant school-fellows, and to bind them over to keep the peace ; reminding them that the fault was expiated by the notice I had taken of it, and the offender put upon his good behaviour ; in short, that he must be free from all farther annoyance till he should offend again.

These reforms in the long-established modes of punishment required to be gradual ; for bold and rash innovations, at all times dangerous, would in this case have been fatal ; and if attempted before proper substitutes were provided, and a certain ascendancy acquired over the minds of the youth, might have ended in the still greater evils of turbulence and misrule.

The first marked step in this progress was, to dispense with corporal punishment in all minor school offences, and to reserve it for cases of moral delinquency or turpitude, against which, as being of pernicious example, and apt to be contagious, boys require to be solemnly and impressively warned. Of the latter kind were deliberate lying, dishonesty, wanton

cruelty, indecency in word or deed ; of the former, neglect of preparation,—failing to answer questions, or to say by heart,—coming late, being inattentive or talking in school-time, teasing a school-fellow, &c.

To repress such misdemeanours as these, or to make them less frequent at least than I will venture to say they had ever been under the reign of terror, I found no very difficult matter, in consequence of the facilities afforded me by the monitorial method, many of which will be readily understood from the details already given.

The ordinary motives to exertion and preparation were, I have already shewn, incalculably strengthened by the certainty of all being called to say lesson every day, and more than once every day, and by the double relation in which each stood as a member of the united class and one of a particular division. But besides these, I had recourse to various modes of exhortation, excitement, reprimand, and penalty. A few of these may be worth enumerating. If a boy was reported by the monitor to be unprepared on the lesson, the gentlest interference on my part was to call him out of the division, and admonish him privately. If he could assign no reason for his failure, he was dismissed with a word of advice, and a hope that this negligence would not occur again ; but at the same time, with an assurance that if it did, I should feel it incumbent on me to reprove him in presence of his division. This had never, probably, occurred to him as an aggravation of disgrace, but the very mention of it was sufficient to make him think it so, and he returned to his place resolved to avoid it, and not perhaps without a sentiment of thankfulness for the at-

tention to his feelings implied by this preliminary warning. But it more frequently happened that a reason *was* assigned for failure in the lesson ; and it was one of the most gratifying proofs of the efficiency of the system, that in the majority of cases that came before me, I was able to make out, by a brief confidential conversation, that some accidental and unusual circumstance in the domestic history of the preceding evening accounted, more or less satisfactorily, for the want of preparation. There had been a party at home and his presence was required ; or his room was put in requisition, and he had no place to study in ; or he had been taken a-visiting by his parents ; or the family was moving to another house, and all his books and implements of study were thrown into confusion : and all these details were confided to me with a candour, simplicity, and reluctance, which sufficiently guaranteed the truth of the statement.

The next step in increase of severity, was to reprimand before the whole division, care being taken, in this as in all other cases, that reproof should be administered more in sorrow than in anger. This mode of reprehending was that most frequently practised, because it gave an opportunity of instructing and warning others, though it was often exchanged for the gentler mode of giving the boy an audience apart, when I read in his eye that he had a private reason to assign, which he was unwilling to impart to any ear but mine.

For minds of less sensibility, or greater tendency to go wrong, there remained a reproof before the assembled class, mild or sharp, as suited the character addressed. Occasion for this reproof was taken, by

calling such boys to say in the class, as soon as the divisions broke up.

And here it may be remarked, that when a master has once acquired the confidence of his pupils, he may constitute almost any thing he pleases reward or disgrace, so completely will their ideas be moulded on what he expresses or seems to feel; and hence an argument against severe inflictions of every kind, seeing that mild ones, husbanded and well applied, may be made equally or even more effectual. A regret expressed that it should be necessary to make such an exposure of a boy who possessed many good qualities, and of whom better things were hoped, had a powerful effect both on the culprit and his fellows, and often rendered any ulterior measures unnecessary. But if a first, or even a second, admonition of this kind failed, there was another kind of public notice which I found to be much dreaded. I have already mentioned that a monitor once appointed retained his particular division for a fortnight, sometimes for three weeks, and that the day before the new appointment, he was enjoined to give in a general written report of all the *res gestæ* during his incumbency. This was for my private information; and I seldom did more in public than read extracts from these reports, and more copious from the praise than the blame side, that there might be as little chance as possible of scattering the elements of discord and ill-will. But when the report of the monitor coincided strikingly with my own observations, and particularly, when a boy had fallen out of his original division, and appeared in more than one report in the descending series, there was an opportunity of putting him to the blush, which he seldom

had a wish to encounter a second time. On the other hand, to be *read out* on such occasions, as having mounted upwards in the same interval through one or more successive stages, was both a reward and a stimulus.

But as there must, of course, be many in a numerous class, either too sluggish or too thoughtless and playful to be permanently or uniformly affected by any of these motives, the last resort was to what was technically called a *pæna*, or written imposition. The name as well as the practice was borrowed from some of the great English Schools, where it is used in aid of corporal punishment, not to supersede it altogether.

Nothing can be more equitable than that a boy who fails to prepare a lesson at home, or give attention to the construing in the class-room, should be obliged to write it out, and be curtailed of his play. It was an improving exercise too, and thus accomplished the most desirable ends of punishment, correction and warning. By insisting that both Latin and English of the day's lesson should be written, a certain amount of annoyance was secured, and it was possible to trench upon play-hours to almost any extent, by exacting much and careful penmanship. To make this task at once useful and formidable, it was usual to appoint one of the best scholars inspector of *pænas*, who, for every gross error committed, made the writer lose a place; and reported to me when there was ground to suspect that the *pæna* was not written by the culprit himself. When this substitute for the punishment of the rod was first introduced, the general feeling seemed to be that it was an acceptable exchange: but ere long the *pæna* was found to be the

more annoying of the two ; and many an idler would have willingly compounded for a few stripes, rather than have to sneak out of sight of his friends and playmates, to perform a task which he had no wish they should know that he had incurred. By suffering pain manfully, there was credit to be gained, and at all events it was soon over ; but no glory accrued from the writing of a *pœna* ; and the task rode him like a nightmare the whole evening.

The substitution, nevertheless, was popular among the boys, as every regulation will be which is at once rational and merciful. Hence it became a point of honour to write the *pœna* prescribed ; and this view of the matter being once established, was adopted by every succeeding class. If it *was* neglected, a double *pœna* was imposed, and in refractory cases, which occurred but rarely, the offender was left with pen, ink, and paper, to finish it in the schoolroom after the rest of the boys were dismissed.

For a considerable time after these various methods had completely superseded corporal punishment in all that regarded the lessons, it was still had recourse to now and then, as the appropriate means of deterring from grave acts of immorality. Let it not, however, be supposed, that in these cases it ever went farther than a few stripes on the hand ; to go beyond that, —not to speak of its indecency,—would have been useless barbarity. For, the marked distinction of punishments which reserved the last disgrace solely for cases, not of literary deficiency, but of moral turpitude, made the mere application of the rod, however slight, so severe an infliction, that at last even that was given up. In the earlier portion of my rectorship,

a few cases occurred which I thought flagrant enough to be invested with the solemnity, and stamped with the reprobation, of corporal chastisement. On such occasions, I availed myself of the opportunity which the unhappy incident afforded, of explaining the nature of the offence, and the grounds on which it was condemned. In this way boys' minds were set right on many of those points of moral conduct, for breaches of which they are, too often, punished by teachers who have taken no pains to inform and forewarn them. The great secret in this, as in the instance of minor misdemeanours, is to estimate fairly the gravity of the offence so long as it is spoken of in the abstract, and to fix its place correctly in the scale of demerit; while at the same time the individual culprit is allowed the benefit of all the circumstances which can be honestly urged in extenuation. When the master seems to take pleasure in dwelling on these, the punishment he does inflict will appear to be extorted from him, as it really is, by the demands of justice, and will create no feeling in the breast either of the sufferer or the spectator which is not friendly to virtue. Precept thus enforced by example, is the most impressive of all moral lessons.

But so regularly did the dread of corporal chastisement increase in proportion to its mildness and rarity, that during the latter half of my rectorship, it was entirely discontinued; partly, and chiefly, in consequence of the manifest improvement in the morality of the boys; partly, because the feeling of honour had become so nice, as to make it too severe an infliction for any school offence that could be committed. The solemnity, and the lecture, were still continued when

occasion offered, but instead of stripes, an extraordinary penal exercise was imposed, not for the next day only, but to be given in every morning, for a week, month, or longer term, according to the character of the offence. This *pœna* was inspected daily by one of the head boys appointed for the purpose, returned to be corrected, the whole dated and preserved by the writer, and the volume presented to me, at the expiration of the term, as his title to a sentence of acquittal. But this *long pœna* was necessary only in very bad cases. The mere notice of any immorality, before the whole class, came at last to be an effectual means both of punishment and prevention : and to a class of boys, whose feelings of honour had been cultivated, exposure of misconduct became the severest part of every sentence, and the fear of it the surest bar against serious offences.

Among the various substitutes for corporal punishment, I have made no mention of one which was and is in very common use ; that of turning a boy down in his class, often by ten or twenty places at a time, in consequence, not of the better saying of those below him, but by the *fiat* of the master. To him this mode of deterring and punishing recommends itself by the tempting facility of applying it. It is generally used in cases of talking or trifling in the class-room, or being late. For the former it is admissible, if preceded by a demand for the next word, or an order to repeat the clause last construed. As to being late, a fault to which boys are so liable that it must be sharply dealt with, it was checked, not by loss of place, but more effectually by stationing the general censor outside the door, to collect the names of the late as they



arrived and note them for a *pœna* to be delivered next morning. Forfeiture of place for such offences is both unjust and inexpedient. It is unjust, because it is unequal; for there are some boys to whom it is the greatest, and others to whom it is the lightest of punishments. It is inexpedient, because the master must thereby counteract his own object, which ought to be, to make the arrangement of places in the class correspond as exactly as possible to the combined talent and acquirement of each individual. But if he thrust down a boy a dozen places because he comes late or is talking in school, or to the bottom of the class for some moral delinquency, it is obvious that he is deranging the graduation of his own scale, and wantonly damaging an instrument which it should be his pride to construct and preserve.

## CHAPTER III.

### INTRODUCTION OF PRIVATE STUDIES.

It is an evil incident to all schools where there are large classes and long hours, that idleness or something worse is apt to prevail among a large proportion of the boys, arising from the want of sufficient motive to stir the sluggishness of some natures, and to repress and direct the indomitable activity of others. I explained in the first chapter the means taken to overcome those evil tendencies, and to make an approach at least to what every public teacher ought to aim at,—that “every boy in school should at all times have something to do, and a motive for doing it.” And nothing certainly could be more striking than the contrast between the drowsiness and languor of the old method, and the vivacity and alertness under the new system. The hours of school passed without a moment of weariness either to master or pupil, and the problem was solved which had at first so much perplexed and appalled me,—how to find constant occupation for minds of attainments and capacities so widely different.

But though that object might appear to have been

accomplished with regard to the hours which the boys spent in school, it was easy to see, that the same inequality of talent and scholarship would lead to their expending very different portions of time at home upon the lessons prescribed. The same task which, to a boy of average capacity, would require two hours of earnest application, would be mastered in one by the abler boys, while the slower would find four hours little enough. This inequality was in part remedied by the greater accuracy of preparation and extent of collateral information which were expected of the upper boys, and which the higher value they attached to their places in the class made imperative. Impelled by emulation and the love of knowledge, they pushed their inquiries to every topic connected, however remotely, with the passages prescribed, and got up, for the examination of next day, an amount of information, historical, antiquarian, geographical, and philological, truly astonishing. But after all, such is the elasticity of talent, when stimulated to industry by proper excitement and reward, that the ordinary business of the class was a field too narrow for developing all its energies. Pitch the average tasks as one may, the prime portion of every large class will still have a considerable capital of unappropriated time, which, if it be not invested in some useful and profitable adventure, runs the risk of being squandered and misemployed. To make that risk less, I proposed a course of voluntary readings to those who found they had time to spare after all other demands upon it were satisfied. In order to tempt the student into this new path, and secure him some reward of immediate gratification, it was desirable that voluntary

readings should be in books somewhat easier than those from which the ordinary tasks were taken, that the student might be encouraged to persevere, by the satisfaction enjoyed in making out, with no aid but his grammar and dictionary, the sense of a Latin classic;—an intellectual feat which, to a schoolboy, is a subject of honest pride, and gives him a feeling of self-respect which has a favourable influence on the formation of his character as well as on his progress in learning.

With this view I prepared and had printed for the use of my class, and especially of the private students, the greater part of the text of the history of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius. This work has the advantage of being written on a very engaging subject. The events of the Grecian expedition against Persia, the chivalrous character of the Macedonian Prince, and the fate of Darius and his family, have all the interest of a novel: and even the blemishes of the author's style, his ornate and poetical descriptions of localities, his rhetorical flourishes, and his ambitious embellishments, however inconsistent with the fidelity and severe simplicity of history, serve rather to recommend him to the imagination and enthusiasm of the youthful mind. His sentences are generally short, and have on that account little of the involved and intricate construction which forms so great an impediment to the youthful reader of Livy. All who intended to profess PRIVATE STUDIES (such was the term applied to this work of supererogation,) were instructed to proceed in strict accordance with a rule laid down, in order that, when the test of examination was applied, no one boy might have any

advantage over another, except what he owed to superior ability and industry. Every private student was bound to keep a journal of his readings, wherein he recorded the difficulties which his grammar and dictionary had not enabled him to solve ; and to a solution of these he was entitled before he was examined on what he had done.

The incentives to enter this career were neither numerous nor costly. They were addressed to the same principle of our nature which makes titles of honour, ribbons, and coronets, objects of pursuit and contention among grown men. The very condition implied, of having a surplus of time to dispose of, invested the private student with a sort of distinction not unlikely to captivate a boy of spirit, and make him feel as if he belonged to a privileged order. He was besides entitled to a Saturday's holiday, provided he acquitted himself creditably in the trials he was subjected to during the preceding week.

The success of this experiment was complete. A considerable number from the very outset enrolled their names in the honourable list of private students ; and subsequently, the proportion advanced to a fourth and even a third of the entire class. Such a spirit, indeed, prevailed among the youth, that permission to engage in private studies was regarded as a reward and a privilege, instead of a task. Petitions were repeatedly addressed to my private ear for leave to read Curtius, by boys low in the class. If the request was granted, and it appeared by the reports of the monitor that the boy failed considerably in the daily business, the permission was withdrawn, and he was advised to prove himself fitter

for the duties incumbent on all, before he aspired to the distinction of the few.

But it was necessary in this, as in all the other business, to take precautions against abuse, and to devise a system of examination and inspection which should detect and expose false pretences to preparation, and teach even the honest and diligent what strictness of preparation was required. To find time for applying this test was no easy matter: for as private studies were a thing *extra ordinem*, in which but a portion of the class took part, it was difficult to have two kinds of business going on at once. The following is given as an approximation, at least, to a solution of the problem.

On the day appointed for examination on private studies, some interesting narrative was selected from Curtius, to be translated and examined on in the hearing of the whole class; it being understood that what they heard read by the private students would be considered as part of the lesson for next day. Having tested the state of preparation by one or two such public construing, the private students were formed into divisions under the most approved of their number in a separate room, with a general monitor to superintend, while I was engaged with the bulk of the class in the ordinary business. In these divisions, registered difficulties were stated and solved, and several rounds of construing and translating gone through and reported on. With these reports in my hand, I went round the ordinary divisions on the Friday, and announced the names of those private students in each whose appearances and well-kept registers entitled them to a Saturday's holiday.

A farther security was taken from the private stu-

dents, by insisting that the difficulties recorded in their registers which had been solved in the class or in divisions, should be engrossed in those registers and shewn the following day: and as difficulties often remained which could not be solved *viva voce* for want of time, the registers containing the statement of them were consigned to the most advanced boys. The solutions were written by them on a slip of paper, and returned to the owner, to be inserted in his book if he was satisfied with them; if not, to appeal to the Rector.

The activity produced by opening up the wide field of private studies, and the amount of classical reading thus accomplished, were things not a little satisfactory. Many pupils live in my memory who not only mastered, by voluntary study, the whole of the Curtius, but a book or two of Livy, in addition to the ordinary lessons; and that in the course of the school year of ten months.

The spirit thus diffused co-operated powerfully with the monitorial arrangement, in producing an effect never more clearly exemplified than in the classes I taught—the uniformly quiet and orderly demeanour of the head-boys. This fact I am induced to mention, because it is at variance with an opinion generally entertained, that the clever boys of a school are the idlest and most unruly. Wherever this happens, it is the fault of the teacher, not of the pupil. Such boys, being more disposed to activity, more ingenious and inventive than the bulk of their school-fellows, and having no fit arena for the display of their noble endowments, betake themselves to less worthy occupations, and expend in mischievous tricks,

frivolous pursuits, and, it may be, in organising resistance and rebellion, those energies for which it was the master's duty to find a more appropriate field and more wholesome aliment. I state the fact broadly, and without fear of contradiction from any of the numerous living witnesses, that the head-boys most distinguished, not merely for patient and successful industry, but for superior ability and genius, were also the best behaved, the most honourable in conduct, and not only the most intelligent in comprehending, but the most exact and obedient in executing, every order, and complying with, and even anticipating, every wish of their teacher. Nor were these qualities accompanied with any overstrained notions of the duty of submissiveness. The discipline had no tendency to produce demure little men, 'full of wise saws and modern instances.' The pupils I speak of, like other boys of their age, were fond of power, privilege, distinction, and above all, of occupation; and all these they found it easiest to obtain by following the course of conduct recommended. A little prudent management is all that is required to make such boys as obedient to the rein and curb as a well-trained colt, and yet to leave them all the grace and playfulness natural to their time of life. They were so far from declining labour, and so alive to the stimulus of praise and distinction, that I have often felt it a duty to restrain their ardour and enjoin more moderate exertion. And this, in some cases, was done in consequence of remonstrances from parents themselves, complaining that they could not prevail on their sons to take healthful exercise and their natural rest. I used not unfrequently, when employed in



revising the lessons of the year during the summer months, to send a detachment of the higher boys to Arthur's Seat, a hill in the neighbourhood of the city, for a few hours, on the understanding that they should spend them in sport, and return at a time fixed, which they never failed to do.

## CHAPTER IV.

### INTRODUCTION OF LATIN VERSIFICATION.

THE system on which I had been taught Prosody in the High School, and which I found established there, when, after an interval of eighteen years, I returned as head-master, was confined to the learning by heart a selection of Ruddiman's Rules for the quantity of syllables, and the application of these in the scanning of Virgil, Horace, and Buchanan's Psalms. For a century at least, Latin versification had never formed one of the regular exercises in the High School.

In the course of a long residence in England, I had an opportunity of witnessing how differently most of the great schools there were conducted in this respect. I found the composition of Latin verses taking precedence of almost everything else, exacted rigorously from every pupil in almost every part of the school, often to the extent of two or three copies a week, and made the standard by which a boy's progress was ascertained and his place fixed. Reflecting on the extreme diversity of the two systems, and their comparative advantages and disadvantages, I felt myself constrained to come to the conclusion, that the

erred as much in excess, as the other fell short

of the proper medium. I could not persuade myself that it was right altogether to neglect the elegant art by which the Buchanans and Melvilles of former days had gained so much credit for themselves and for Scotland, and in which Milton and Gray had rivalled the ancients; while, on the other hand, it seemed clear that, to insist upon every pupil above the lowest forms composing original Latin verses, was to exact more than could reasonably be expected,—more indeed than was desirable, at the sacrifice of time which even moderate success in this kind of exercise required. The result of my reflections was this, that certain elementary parts of the art might be taught with advantage to the whole class, but that all beyond was a career which none should be urged to enter by any motive but the stirrings of talent, taste, and honourable ambition. Before a boy can act on these impulses, he must have gone through a process of mechanical verse-making, the steps of which are so little known in Scotland, that it may be worth while to describe them.\*

When the class had been drilled in the preliminary stage, and the abler boys had learned the use of the instrument, and were familiar with the necessary conditions of Latin hexameters and pentameters, a subject was prescribed, couched in a quotation from some classic which served as a theme or motto, and a few hints were suggested as to the mode of treating it. Such was the success of this experiment, that the very boys whose first attempts, even in the lowest and easiest stage, had been feeble and unsuccessful,

\* This description, which can interest none but teachers, I have removed to Appendix, Note on p. 63.

executed in the course of the year original compositions in Latin verse, which, imperfect as they were, might have done credit to more experienced practitioners and more enlightened instruction. I was surprised no less than delighted—I might almost say intoxicated—with a result so unlooked for;—and the very year after the experiment was begun, I edited a small volume of specimens, as a proof to my fellow-teachers in Scotland of what might be done in a short space of time in this neglected field.

For any purpose but this, the publication was premature; and the performances,—if read without bearing in mind that they were those of boys not above fifteen years of age, not one of whom seventeen months before—many of them not seven months before—knew how to make even a ‘nonsense verse,’—could not fail to appear lame and impotent, and a very uncalled for addition to the stock of indifferent Latin poetry already extant. But success so unexpected hurried me into this imprudence;

— me quoque pectoris  
Tentavit in dulci juvena  
Fervor, et in celeres iambos  
Misit furentem.

Accordingly the publication, having attracted the notice of some English critics, who were not bound to make any of these allowances, was treated with an asperity which, in the view they naturally took of it, was not undeserved. But I was the less disposed to complain of the castigation, as I got from the Review some useful hints and wholesome counsels, and acted on the Virgilian maxim—*fas est et ab hoste doceri*. If the contents of the volume published in 1812 be

compared with the specimens of later date printed in Dr. Steven's History of the High School, and particularly with that last and best of all in 1820,\* it will, I think, be admitted by English scholars that I had profited by experience.

I was led by the result of this experiment to adopt exercises in Latin verse as a regular branch of school business. Various considerations, however, dissuaded me from giving it that paramount importance and universality which it has obtained in most of the English schools, public and private. Of these considerations some were suggested by the status and condition of my pupils, a very large proportion of whom were destined for professions, and would be placed in situations where such an accomplishment would be much less useful to them than other acquirements to which I could devote the time which it required. But my chief argument against the English practice was drawn from considerations of a more general nature, and to my mind conclusive in reference to any assemblage whatever of British youth. The objects proposed in teaching the dead languages are manifold; but it will be readily conceded, that one of the foremost is to give facility in comprehending the sense of the authors who write in them;—to make the pupil familiar with productions, whose intrinsic merit in respect both of diction and of thought, enhanced as it undoubtedly is by their antiquity and their being embodied in noble and difficult idioms, has long entitled them to be regarded as standards of taste, and the most approved vehicles of manly sense, exalted sentiment, and liberal opinion. Now if this title be

\* That copy of verses I have inserted in Appendix, Note on p. 65.

acknowledged, it seems to follow, that after conquering the first difficulties of grammar, the aim of the teacher should be to analyze accurately, and read extensively; and to accompany these processes with such prelection and illustration as to create an appetite for useful knowledge, and inspire a relish for what is doing at the time, and a desire to do more in the same direction. But how is all this to be effected, if the youth, before he can find his way securely through the labyrinth of declension, conjugation, and syntax, while his vocabulary is yet scanty and his fancy yet undeveloped, shall be condemned, with such tools and such materials, to hammer out verses in a foreign language? Is not his failure next to a certainty? and even in the rare case where he succeeds, can we look for more than *versus inopes rerum nugæque* (not always) *canoræ*? Is it not better to wait till a stock of words and ideas be gleaned from a wider field of classical reading, and some symptom appear of the judgment ripening, and the imagination being awakened, and *then* to accelerate the march of both, by proposing to the youthful aspirant an imitation of those beauties which he has learned to admire? And can such imitation be reasonably expected, even after the most skilful preparation, from *every* pupil of a large school, whatever be his turn of mind, his powers of invention, or his possession of the language? Suppose a teacher of the French language, willing to follow the example of the most approved masters of the great English schools, were to give notice that he considered it as the most important of all the exercises and acquirements of his pupils, to write verses like those of the *Henriade* or the *Ver Vert*; that in

his academy, facility in translating, and even speaking French would be held subordinate to the art of versifying, and that exercises in that department were to be twice as numerous as in any other, and more rigidly enforced,—how would parents receive such an intimation? And yet there is nothing in it more absurd than the established practice in the classical seminaries of England of longest standing and highest repute. The mysteries of French verse, its masculine and feminine rhymes, its pauses, its absorptions and elisions of vowels, are as nothing compared to the difficulties and dangers that environ the young Latinist; and they are in themselves quite as well worth knowing as the niceties of Greek and Roman versification, were it not for the fictitious value the latter has acquired by the practice I now venture to condemn. I object to the making of Latin verses being made imperative on all, not merely as an exercise of comparatively little value, but as a thing altogether impracticable. It is no easy thing to compose lines in one's own language, which shall have even the lowest requisites of poetry—cadence and rhyme. What then is likely to happen when copies of original Latin verses,—on a topic not familiar, in a language differing widely from their own in structure and idiom, and in which they are still novices,—are required of all but the lower forms of a large school? What, but that the manufacture of the article will be confined to the few who have acquired the knack, and a traffic be thus set on foot of barter, or gratuity, which the master will be obliged to wink at, because the rule of the school, forsooth, compels him to exact an impossibility.

Moved by these considerations, I never made composition of Latin verses on a theme given, more than a voluntary exercise. But as a 'copy of verses,' correct in quantity and structure, elegant in Latinity, and original in conception, was understood to be one of the greatest achievements which a boy could perform, and led to the highest distinction, there was always a considerable number (generally, I would say, from 15 to 20,) who were ready to enter the lists. It contributed to raise the importance attached to this exercise, and consequently to add to the pains bestowed, that it never was prescribed oftener than once a fortnight. Every alternate Friday, the subject was proposed in the hearing of the whole class; and to give the matter more dignity in their eyes, as well as greater facility, I generally read from notes of my own, a few hints as to the topics to chuse, and the train of thought to follow out. The verse exercises were given in on Tuesday, and on Wednesday they were publicly spoken of according to the scale of merit, and returned with faults in quantity and concord marked, and a general character affixed,—*satis bene, bene, admodum bene*, and in rare cases, *optime*,—a judgment which carried a boy *ipso facto* to the head of the class. The writers were instructed to correct the blunders marked, and shew a fair copy on the following Friday, and this secured them a holiday on the morrow. The best of these improved copies were suspended for inspection (*promulgated* was the term,) during the following week, and the boys likely to profit by it were sent to peruse them, in parties of eight or nine at a time, while some easy business was going on in the class. The high character that had been given of these exercises



made them be read with interest, and many who would have considered making out the sense of an equal number of lines, not more difficult to construe, of Ovid or Virgil, as a task, were eager to be allowed to read these productions of their school-fellows, and were often fired with the ambition of rivalling what brought such honour and privilege to the writers.

Some again, unable perhaps, from imperfect previous training in the language, to accomplish the Latin verse, but having a turn for versifying in English, would volunteer their services to translate into English couplets the Latin verses which had been much commended, or which they themselves took a fancy for; and these English couplets, when good, were hung up alongside of the original.

No Latin verses were ever commended or promulgated, till I had satisfied myself that they were the genuine production of the boy who gave them in. Deception, indeed, upon this point was scarcely possible, Latin versification being, at that time, altogether unknown, except to those whom I had myself trained; and as the task was a voluntary one, the disgrace of detection, had it been possible to borrow, would have acted as a preventive.

## CHAPTER V.

### OTHER WRITTEN EXERCISES PRESCRIBED.

IN order to give scope to talent in the different directions which it takes, the writing of other exercises was prescribed ; some to the whole class, others of greater difficulty, to those who had a mind to try. The rule was, that there should be two written exercises every week,—one, a translation into English of some choice passage in a classic, and the other, the turning of a few sentences of English narrative into Latin prose. As the former was generally part of what had already been construed as a class lesson, and was mainly intended to give the habit of English composition, an option was not unfrequently given to the head boys to try, instead of it, some feat of more difficult accomplishment. And even when Latin into English prose was made the exercise common to all, scope was given for superior industry and excellence, by recommending a free version, accompanied with notes critical and explanatory ; or if the passage was from a poet, there was an invitation to attempt it in English couplets. The weekly exercise now spoken of was written at home, and given in on the Tuesday morning. The other, and more difficult one—English into Latin prose—was the

only regular weekly exercise which I found established in the practice of the school, though sentences of Mair's Introduction, and an English version of a classic, were occasionally prescribed. The Latin weekly exercise was called the *Friday or Low School version*; because it was written on that day in the presence of the master, in the writing-room attached to the school. This practice of my predecessor I faithfully followed, as an excellent means of levelling all distinctions but those of proficiency and ability. A portion of English was taken down from my dictation, and, a few hints being given how to select phrases and avoid anglicisms, the class proceeded to render it into Latin. Meantime the strictest silence was observed, that every boy might be left to his own resources. It was necessary, of course, to proportion the length and difficulty of the exercise to the average power of execution; and hence it was, that the abler boys had finished it before the majority had got half way. These remnants of time were employed, in the earlier part of the school year, in practising the elementary steps of Latin versification. Here the struggle was, who should append to his prose Latin, the greatest number of hexameters and pentameters,—meaningless, but correct in measure and quantity, and in euphony. At a later period in the session, four lines of English *sense* were dictated, to translate into the Ovidian distich; and last of all, if this too were accomplished, they were to add a couplet or two of their own sense in continuation of the subject.—I have gone into this detail, as a specimen of the various opportunities which occurred, and were taken advantage of, in the teaching of a numerous class, for putting to profit fragments of time, when the attention of the higher boys was not re-

quired to the business going on, and for employing them in feats of intellect which put their powers to the full stretch.

But now that the nature of these two weekly exercises of the whole class has been explained, it may be asked, how they were disposed of. It was obviously a labour which no man could overtake or submit to, to read and mark the errors in 400 exercises every week, and examine them a second time to see that the errors were duly corrected; more especially when it was found that the work of correction and revision might be done, if not always so accurately, at least more profitably for all parties, by having recourse to a division of labour. Here again the monitorial arrangement presented great facilities. By correcting the exercises of the monitors myself, and returning them, I could entrust to them the task of examining and marking the versions, each those of his own division. The number, not exceeding nine to each monitor, was not oppressive, and the consciousness of knowledge, and pride of superior sagacity, easily reconciled them to this addition to their labour; and many felt it a real gratification. At the same time, as they might be tempted by the press of other business to neglect this duty, the careful performance of it was secured by precautions which made evasion difficult: and the monitors who had versions to correct might plead exemption from preparing the lessons for the following day.\*

\* I have again thought it better to refer the practical teacher to the Appendix (Note on p. 72,) for the account given in MS. of the various processes by which the errors of the exercises were detected, marked, corrected, and reproduced by the writers of them in the amended state.

The correction of errors being secured, and every boy having his amended exercise in his hand on an appointed day, I proceeded to enumerate and comment upon the 'prevailing errors,' that is, those which had been committed in a large proportion of the exercises as originally written. This prelection experience proved to me to be the most profitable way of communicating grammatical knowledge, inasmuch as it ensures a singular degree of attention, interest, and intelligence on the part of the pupils. By inspecting the exercises of the monitors, and of a few in different parts of the class, I was able to detect various processes of thinking that must have gone through the heads of the writers before they fixed on the exact turn of expression employed. While I interpreted these and gave them back, as it were, the reflected image of their own thoughts; while at the same time I explained the principles that should have guided them to one phrase or guarded them against another, not only were they amused and interested, but the rules and elegancies of both languages, English and Latin, were much more deeply imprinted on their memory than could have been effected by a dry lesson on grammar, or a discussion of knotty points or various readings in the text of a classic. After this prelection, a correct edition was read over slowly once or perhaps twice, and a fair copy ordered to be shewn on a future day.

There are few things which I deem more important in the conduct of a school, than the 'second shewing,' that is, the presentation of the written exercise in an amended form; and I would dwell upon the teacher's duty to enforce it, because it is a duty which

is too frequently neglected. It seems often to be thought that enough is done, if a certain number of exercises be written and received. The task of correcting them, not being the most agreeable of the master's duties, is left unperformed, and by a sort of tacit compact between master and scholar, the exercises so rigorously called for at the first shewing are huddled into some corner, and no more heard of. Even the pains-taking, conscientious master, when he has once gone through the principal work of correction, is too apt to think his task over, and to forget that, unless he can engage the mind of the boy to reconsider and improve his written performances, the writing of them is more likely to confirm him in error, than improve him in knowledge. It is only by setting up the errors of the original copy as beacons to warn and guide him in transcribing and amending it, that any practical benefit can arise from writing versions. First copies are the rude material out of which precise and accurate knowledge is to be elaborated. They are the means of attaining an end; and if not so employed, are useless.

These views pressing upon me more forcibly as my experience in teaching increased, I attached greater importance every succeeding year to the second shewing; and as, in the crowd of business, it was not easy to find time for everything, a compendious way was sometimes adopted for securing attention to the task of correction. It was made imperative to have a list of *errata* at the end of the original exercise, as is usual in a printed book; one column containing the error, and the other the correction; so that, by the mere inspection of these columns, the monitor or

the teacher could see whether all that was formerly wrong was now understood and corrected in the manuscript.\*

I am far from meaning to affirm that the employment of monitors to inspect exercises, secures an equally perfect correction of what is wrong, as might be made by an assiduous master. But this I have no hesitation in saying, that though mistakes and omissions will not unfrequently occur, the method described is nevertheless much more effectual than any other in making written exercises, not indeed things for exhibition, blurred over as they must often be with repeated alterations, but a means of substantial improvement. The master himself, at an enormous expense of time and toil, may correct and improve them; but these amendments excite, in the boys who receive them, a degree of attention by no means corresponding to the labour which the teacher has bestowed. As the pupil presumes not to doubt the *ipse dixit* of his master, all the corrections pass unquestioned, and give rise to little or no deliberation or reflection in the mind of the writer. But the case is widely different when a school-fellow is the critic.

\* One other method of extracting the full amount of benefit from written exercises, I have not alluded to in the text, because it was an after-thought, and first introduced some twelve or fifteen years ago, into the discipline of the Humanity Classes in the University, where it has been continued ever since with signal advantage. The members of the class are instructed, when commencing the business of the Session, to write every exercise prescribed on paper of the same size, to leave an inside margin, and to preserve them, that towards the close, they may be stitched together, with a title-page and table of contents, and put into my hands, to be inspected and have a general character affixed.

Every marked word or imputed blunder undergoes a scrupulous and inquisitorial investigation; no effort is spared to find the monitor at fault, and the latter must defend his act by incontrovertible reasons, before a single point of attack is surrendered. Hence considerable latitude was allowed for argument and reply in the division, because more knowledge circulated in the keen contention of boy with boy, than any exertion of a master could diffuse. To have an error, or even half an error, deducted by discussion or appeal, from the number marked against him, was a triumph, to obtain which a boy would explore grammar and dictionary, and hunt out authorities, as long as there was any chance of succeeding;—unconscious all the while, that in the very search, however unavailing it might be for its immediate object, he was sure to be a gainer.

Let it be observed, however, that the vicarious mode above described of dealing with exercises, was applied only to those which were common to the whole class. The more recondite and difficult exercises, which were reserved for advanced boys and were of course more manageable in point of number, were not entrusted to monitors, but put into my hands and inspected only by me. Such trials of strength were of various kinds, springing often out of, or suggested by, the particular authors and subjects in hand or some excursive prelection into which I had been led; but of those that most frequently occurred, I shall mention a few, in justice both to the character of the pupils and to the discipline of the High School.

I have already spoken of Latin and English verses, as belonging to the superior class of exercises which



were expected only from a few. But there were besides, some of this description, which required more thought and application than even the most careful husbandler of time could command, in the daily and weekly routine of school business. They were therefore reserved for the three brief recesses which occur in our scholastic year of ten months, one, of eight days, at Christmas, and two, each of five days, in the beginning of November and of May.

1. One of the most common of these was called *Abridged Narrative*.—Suppose the class to have been engaged for a considerable time in construing daily portions of Livy or Sallust,—it was prescribed as an exercise for one of these recesses, to write a succinct account of the events embraced in that portion of the historian's narrative; and to do it under the following restrictions. The writer was at liberty to peruse the Latin original, as often as he chose, before he took pen in hand; but on beginning to write a first copy, the book was to be laid aside, and never referred to in transcribing the fair copy, unless it were to fill in a date or a proper name. Such an exercise brings into play the faculties of memory and judgment, and furnishes a measure of the predominance of the one faculty or the other in the mind of the writer. I take up, for example, one exercise, and trace in it proofs of a tenacious memory, in the minuteness and fidelity of the details, while there is a manifest deficiency in the power of combining, arranging, and condensing the materials supplied by the memory, so as to sink minor details, and preserve in due relief and relative proportion the prominent points of the story.—I take up another, and am at first disappointed by its brevity as

compared with the former, but come at last to give it a decided preference, upon finding in it a masterly sketch of what is essential in the succession of events. I am now not so much inclined to complain of some omissions and even inaccuracies in the facts, as to admire the compass of mind which could take in the whole subject in one view, and place it, so to speak, at such a distance from the mind's eye, that the minuter parts were thrown into the shade, and the main facts preserved in good keeping and harmony.—I take up a third, and I am soon satisfied that the writer is exceedingly conscientious and pains-taking, but deficient both in memory and judgment. After many ineffectual struggles, he has felt himself obliged to have recourse to his Livy; and thus, with far more trouble to himself than either of the other two, he abridges the contents of each succeeding chapter, with purblind accuracy and without discrimination.

An abstract, done under such conditions, I conceive to be a much better introduction to the difficult art of composing in English prose, than the *Themes* so commonly set in English Schools. In these Themes, some apophthegm or moral maxim, the exponent of an extensive and philosophical survey of human affairs, such as "Virtue is its own reward," "Evil communications," &c., "Money is the root of all evil," is to be proved by argument and example, and objections answered; and this is expected from boys without experience, without knowledge either of men or books, utterly incapable of speculating on any general topic, and least of all upon ethics. Having no stock of their own to draw from, what else can they do but borrow from some book common-places which they can ill

comprehend, or purloin old copies which have become a sort of heir-looms in the school? On the other hand, in making his abstract of a narrative, the boy works on a subject already familiar to him, and level to his understanding, and being relieved from the painful effort of beating about for ideas in a field where there is no game, he is more likely to succeed in clothing the ideas he has, in appropriate language, and even takes pleasure in the mental exercise.

2. Abstracts of narrative of a similar kind, but in Latin prose, were occasionally prescribed to the best scholars, and, if certified to have been done with closed book, were received as a substitute for verses, and ranked as high: for it is a task not less difficult to write good Latin prose, than to compose an equal amount of correct Latin verses.

3. Another variety of these exercises for the few deserves to be mentioned. The best scholars of the class were taken into an adjoining room, having nothing with them but pen, ink, and paper. Then, calling to their recollection the subject of a story or anecdote which they had read as lesson in Curtius or Livy some weeks or months before, I left them to write the narrative, each in his own way, but as fully and as much in the words of the classic as they could. On the first announcement of such an exercise, surprise, bordering on despair, was depicted on many a countenance; but that feeling soon gave way to an expression of intense thought, indicated by assuming unusual attitudes, by an unconscious stare, knitting of brows, and rubbing of foreheads. This is an exercise, which not only improved the memory and strengthened the judgment, but stored the minds of boys with a stock of

choice Latinity ;—an effect which was greatly promoted by calling upon them to collate their own abstract with the original of Livy or Curtius, and amend the exercise accordingly.

4. Another mode occasionally resorted to for improving in English composition, was technically called *amplification*. From a few short hints in Sallust or Livy, given as the substance of what somebody had said, it was required to put into the mouth of that person a speech of considerable length, in which every argument was used which the circumstances could suggest.\*

5. Another good exercise of mind for boys who have made some progress in their Latin studies, is to turn one of the speeches which abound in the Roman historians, from what is called the *direct* into the *oblique* or reported form.

No one can read the debates in Parliament without being aware of the difference between the two modes, nor without observing how ill adapted our language is for the *indirect* form, which is that generally employed in newspapers,—the *he* and the *him* con-

\* On one occasion of such an exercise, a youth, who had been much in the habit of writing in English verse, gave in what he very honestly believed to be a prose speech ; and nobody was more surprised than the writer himself, to be told that it ran in blank verse, with the exception of two lines, which had the rhythm of verse, but had each two redundant syllables. Like Pope, he

—lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came,

and might have said with Ovid,

Sponte sua numeros carmen veniebat ad aptos,  
Et quod tentabam dicere, versus erat.

But this writing in blank verse, without knowing it, is no more than Mr. Dickens has done,—in his earlier works at least.

stantly requiring the parenthetical insertion of proper names, to prevent confusion and ambiguity. The Latin, on the other hand, is admirably fitted for this purpose. It has two sets of pronouns, one (*sui, sibi, se,*) to express the speaker, and the other, (*is, ille, &c.,*) the person or persons who were addressed or spoken of. It has also a peculiarity of construction appropriated to this form of speech, which consists in the use of the infinitive mode with an accusative before it in the main clauses, and the subjunctive in the subordinate, to the exclusion of the indicative mode in any verb which comes after that which introduces the report, and which, indeed, the whole report is subordinate to, and affected by.\* This doctrine is now beginning to be taught in grammar schools; but it was little understood and less attended to in teaching, till the late Dr. Carson, then one of the masters of the High School, brought the subject before the public in a little unpretending volume, published in 1818, which attracted the notice of, and received high commendation from, that distinguished scholar, the late Dr. Samuel Parr. From that date to the end of my connection with the High School, I made the conversion of one of these forms of a speech into the other, an occasional exercise for the higher boys, as I have

\* It is worth observing that, though any such form is now unknown to the English language, it may be regarded as a proof of its having once existed there and being founded in the principles of human nature, that in the dialect of the Scottish peasantry we can still trace the use of it, in the accounts they give of any occurrence, when they wish to be understood as not vouching for the truth of what they report. In such cases, all verbs used in that part of the narrative are modified by the sign, *süd*,—the *sollte* of the German;—"It seems, he *süd ha'* done" so and so.

done ever since in College. The turning of the *direct* into the *oblique* or *reported* form is a mental exercise, more difficult than at first sight it may appear; requiring not only a thorough comprehension of the construction alluded to, but a nice consideration of the proper tenses, as well as the proper modes. To steer the right course, amidst the multitude of perplexing questions that arise, requires considerable power both of discrimination and abstraction, and some familiarity with the practice of the classics themselves.

## CHAPTER VI.

### INSTITUTION OF QUARTERLY EXAMINATIONS.

ONE of the prime objects in the contemplation of a High School boy was the day of the annual public Examination and distribution of prizes, in the beginning of August. It took place in the presence of the Magistrates, who are Patrons of the school, of City Clergy, Professors of the University, parents of the boys, teachers from the town and neighbourhood, and the friends of education generally. It lasted four or five hours, and was understood to consist of a review of the entire business of the preceding ten months, a full statement of which was laid before the examiners. It was their province to select the books and passages to be read, to hear them translated, and to question upon them ; though that duty generally devolved upon the teacher himself. At the close of the business, the presiding Magistrate distributed prize-books (called *premiums*,) to the thirty or forty highest boys, and adjourned the re-assembling of the school to the 1st of October.

The prospect of the dreaded day, and all its accompaniments, was not unproductive of beneficial effects.

From the time a boy entered the class, every place he gained or lost had an importance in his eyes, not only for its immediate result, but in reference to its bearing on the place he was to hold at the 'Examination.' To be high enough to receive a premium was like taking a degree with honours at College: and the emulation was still further kept alive by the gold medal which awaited the head-boy of the Rector's class, who was *dux* of the whole school. The appearance each was to make before his friends and the public on that day, had a sensible influence in quickening his diligence. Nor is its effect on the masters to be overlooked. They, too, were in some sense put upon their trial. As the examination of all the classes went on simultaneously, the visitors moved about from one room to another, and formed their own conclusions from what they witnessed, as to the zeal, ability, and success of the respective teachers, and the state of discipline among their boys. And the opinions thus formed, circulating in various directions, materially affected the resort to their classes, and consequently the amount of their emoluments.

But considerable as these advantages were, and disposed as I was from my own boyish recollections to rate them high, I soon found that there was an alloy of evil. As regarded the master, for example: though the prospect of the Examination kept him on the alert, it tended to give his diligence a wrong direction. On the parents and the great mass of the audience, facility and promptitude in answering made the deepest impression. To them hesitation and thought looked like imperfect knowledge. Few were able to appreciate the superior value of an answer, slowly and deliberately



drawn from deep-laid principles, as compared with an answer brought from the ready store-house of an over-cultivated memory. Quick firing was more prized than deliberate aim; and the master's watchword to every boy on his legs was

—cave ne titubes, mandataque frangas.—*Hor. Ep. I. 13. 19.*

Hence arose the custom which I found established in all the classes, of dedicating the two months which preceded the public Examination to revision, that is, to a repetition of the lessons which had been gone over since the first day of October. This process produced in the teacher no less than in the pupil a sensation of weariness, made still more distressing by the enervating effect of summer heat in a crowded room. Mind and body, alike jaded, required the stimulus of novelty to save both from sinking into apathy. In such a state of things, there was nearly an end of all preparation of lessons at home. In order to have the business of eight months revised in two, lessons of inordinate length were prescribed, which the good scholars, feeling or presuming themselves to be masters of all that had been read, seldom or never looked at; while the indifferent or careless were discouraged from attempting in the gross, what they had learned but imperfectly in detail. Hence it was that the good habits acquired, of labour at home and attention in the classroom, were endangered; and the love of study, which had been fed in the former part of the year by constant accessions of interesting knowledge, waxed cold in this process of rumination.

Another evil tendency of annual Examinations was, to engender a morbid sensibility to loss of place, which

led occasionally to painful exhibitions of selfishness and ill-will; nor could the most even-handed justice on the part of the master always secure him from suspicions of undue partiality.

It was with the view of remedying some of these evils, and palliating others, that the plan was adopted of having Quarterly Examinations. The last week of every third month was devoted chiefly to revising the lessons of that quarter; and the last day but one of the trimestre was employed in a public Examination on the business done. As an audience was essential to give this examination dignity and effect, parents were invited to be present, and the attendance was secured of some friends of my own, whose names were as well known as their characters were universally respected. In such a presence, it was easy and it was important, on the one hand, to expose the idler's past negligence and warn him for the future; and on the other, to afford the assiduous student opportunities of earning his fair reward of praise and encouragement. And, indeed, for such a purpose the Quarterly was in many respects better fitted than the Annual Examination. The latter took place on the last day of the school-year, and was immediately followed by a vacation of two months; so that any delinquency or misdemeanour on that day was sure never to come up in judgment against the culprit. But in the quarterly examination all that passed was noted and made the subject of animadversion, next day: failures and poor appearances were noticed and deplored; and the prospect held out, of retrieving character that day three months, if the intervening time were well spent.

Having thus prevented the accumulation of matter

to be revised, by confining the business of each quarter within itself, I could dispense with much of the irksome but necessary duty of revision. Had I the thing to do now, I should content myself with the quarterly retrospects, and not attempt to go over again, at so inauspicious a season, the entire lessons of the year. As it was, the evil was abated, by selecting the finest passages only for revisal, and by employing every alternate day in lessons altogether new. Another way of relieving the superior scholars from the intolerable irksomeness of listening to indifferent construing of old matter familiar to them, was the following: In prescribing on Tuesday a considerable section of Livy or Sallust for Thursday, the higher boys had the option to write an abridged narrative of the whole passage, it being understood, that if they produced it on the morning of that day at *nine*, they should have play while the rest were engaged with the old lesson. The few who embraced this offer earned more of glory than play by the exercise, and more of solid improvement than of either. This method of rewarding meritorious exertion is also a very sensible relief to the master, if he feels it (as he ought to do) a reproach to himself that the higher boys are compelled to sit still doing nothing, or counterfeiting an attention which they cannot command to the *crambe repetita* of an old lesson.

It is probable, that in the course of a few years more, for it was a late innovation, I should have made these quarterly retrospects so popular and so well attended as to have answered all the purposes of the annual examination; and that thus the latter occasion might have been made, what, to me, seems

to be its proper object, a day, not of examination, but of exhibition. In that case a single specimen, from each division, of proficiency in construing might suffice ; or even that might give place to a display of remarkable feats of ability, the public reading of exercises of the first quality, and the declaiming of fine passages in the classics ; and time be thus reserved for giving all proper celebrity to the distribution of prizes in presence of the whole school.

## CHAPTER VII.

### ON THE METHODS EMPLOYED IN THE TEACHING OF GREEK IN THE RECTOR'S CLASS.

IN order to understand the difficulties I had to contend with in this branch of classical discipline, it is proper to premise, that the High School of Edinburgh, by its original constitution, was a school for teaching the Latin language only; and that, in point of fact, nothing else was ever taught there before Dr. Adam was appointed Rector in 1768. The new practice, first introduced by him, of teaching the elements of Greek in his class was resisted by the *Senatus Academicus* as an encroachment on the privileges of the University. A memorial and petition was actually presented to the Town Council, or Corporation, of Edinburgh, who are the Patrons of the College as well as of the High School, praying that they would lay an interdict upon this innovation. But the municipal body had the good sense to pay no regard to this remonstrance; and Dr. Adam continued to give lessons in elementary Greek to those of his pupils whose parents wished them to learn it. It was thus a sort of private class of his own; the business of which he could not well mix up with that of the general class,

seeing that a small minority only attended the Greek. He was obliged, therefore, to take a separate hour for teaching it ; and as he instituted a class about the same time for the no less important subject of Ancient Geography, which, for the same reason, required to be taught apart, it was arranged that, of the five additional hours in the week which he gave to those branches, two should be allotted to Greek and three to Geography. The portion of time given to Greek was obviously too small for much to be done in that department, especially with boys who came to the Rector's class ignorant of the alphabet of the language; and little accordingly was done, as I can testify from my own recollections as a pupil.

About the year 1805, the Patrons so far recognised the propriety of introducing Greek as to ordain, that the elements of it should be taught by the several Masters, in the fourth year of their course, to as many as chose it. But as they provided no additional emolument when they imposed additional labour, it was not to be expected that the Masters, having no profit and little credit to gain, would display much zeal in their new task. Nor am I aware that this arrangement increased to any sensible amount the taste for, or knowledge of, that noble language.

THE efforts which I made to extend and improve the study of Greek in the Rector's class of the High School, and of which I am about to give some account, had this at least to plead in their behalf, that they awakened the public mind to the importance of instructing boys in that language, and diffused among parents a more general desire that their children

should receive the elements of that instruction *at school*.

This result was proved by an increase of numbers, which was proportionally greater in the Greek class than even in the Latin. During the latter part of last century the average number of Greek pupils was below thirty; and in the first *decad*\* of the present, it had seldom reached fifty; it was not so high at least when I took charge of it in 1810. It increased regularly from that time forwards; till, instead of one third or less, it numbered upwards of two thirds of the entire class,—attendance on Greek being still optional, and paid for by a separate fee. Any attempt to make it imperative on all who entered the Rector's class to learn Greek, would, at that time, have been premature and abortive; but the constantly increasing majority of boys who enrolled their names for both languages, made it necessary that Greek should assume greater importance in the school business, and be no longer considered in the light of a private class and a subordinate branch of study. Nevertheless, the multiplicity of business in the Latin class, and the increase of its numbers, rendered it a matter of no small difficulty, even admitting it would have been strictly just, to withdraw from the Latin any portion of its allotted hours.

Nor was the very limited time,—two hours a week under Dr. Adam,—the only obstacle to the improvement of Greek discipline. A very formidable im-

\* Dr. Samuel Johnson led the way to the prevailing orthography of this word, "decade," which is contrary to reason and all analogy, as may be seen in Monad, Triad, Chiliad, Myriad, Iliad, Troad, Pleiad, &c.

pediment presented itself in the variety of stages of progress among the boys who composed the Greek class at its formation each October. The differences were wider and more marked than those which I formerly described as existing in the Latin class. For, besides the ordinary diversities among boys who have gone through the same course of instruction, the Greek class, at the commencement, consisted of three distinct sets of pupils;—one, who had been members of my own Greek class the former year; another, who had been taught more or less Greek under their master of the fourth year; and a third set, forming always a large section of the whole, who had learned no Greek, and knew not even the alphabetic characters.

To blend those three sets into one class would have been to risk the proficiency of all; and to find time to teach them separately was no easy problem to solve. The means I took to meet the difficulty will be understood from the statements which follow.

It had been customary, in Dr. Adam's time, not to assemble the classes of Greek and Geography for a month after the meeting of the school. Of this interval I availed myself, to form a class of the mere beginners, and to meet them for a short time every day; the object being, to simplify the elementary parts of Greek grammar to such an extent as to enable them to overtake the least advanced of the other pupils, and to be classed with them at the end of the month. And the prospect held out of being so classed, and allowed to cope with those who were a whole year's teaching a-head of them, had no small effect in animating the exertions of these beginners.

Being aware, however, that very little could be ac-



completed in so short a time, by proceeding in the ordinary way from page to page of a printed grammar, I tried a more compendious method; and if I enlarge on this topic of elementary teaching at greater length, both in the Text and in the Appendix, than is quite consistent with the object I had in view in penning these Notes, it is from the hope that, should they ever see the light, the discussions may not only have some interest for readers who are fond of speculations on General Grammar, but may suggest hints to teachers in circumstances like my own, for facilitating elementary instruction in other languages besides Greek, and above all in their own.

Had I found in the hands of the boys, or elsewhere, a Greek horn-book sufficiently short and simple, I might have been tempted to use it; but a large black board served my purpose still better. On it I wrote in chalk the Greek letters and the words which were to furnish the text of each day's demonstration.

In this process of instruction, at once oral and visual, I confined myself to the barest outline of elementary Greek. The prevailing methods of declension and conjugation were explained from an example exhibited on the board; but all exceptions were for the present omitted, unless they could be classed under a head scarcely less comprehensive than the general rule itself. In this preliminary stage, I considered my object to be gained, when I had enabled a beginner, in the first place, to know the Greek alphabetic characters,—their names and their value as signs of sound; secondly, to distinguish the declensions, to decline nouns and adjectives not very anomalous, and to have a few notions of the gender of nouns as indi-

cated by the terminations, and of the rules for contracting concourses of vowels; and lastly, to be quite at home in the voices, modes, tenses, numbers, and persons of the verb. By the time these three points were gained, I do not say with all, but with a considerable portion of the mere beginners, the month had expired, and the business of the Greek class required to be begun.

The means taken to communicate the elementary principles of Greek grammar in the way described were simple enough, and for that very reason are apt to be overlooked; some of them may be even thought whimsical and childish fancies, but only by those who are not aware how important it is, in the outset of a dry study, to disencumber it of all extrinsic difficulties, to remove obstructions, and to help the novice over the threshold. Moor's Grammar was that which I found in use in the school; but of grammars, as yet, I took little or no account. Tabular views on the board supplied their place, and enabled me to inculcate the first principles and processes, by the combined and simultaneous exercise of the two senses of seeing and hearing. Each lesson consisted of a prelection on what was before the eyes of every learner in strong relief; and this prelection was only interrupted by occasional questions, to ascertain how far my explanations had been understood. If the first boy asked gave no answer, I tried another, and a third; if still in vain, I concluded that the fault was mine, and repeated the demonstration more slowly and fully. The very novelty of all looking on one board, instead of each on his own book, had its effect in sustaining attention. I recommended to the beginners to make themselves familiar at home with the form and power

of the Greek letters ; but I did not require, because I set no value upon, the learning of the alphabet by heart.

In all alphabets, and the Greek among the rest, the letters succeed each other in a sequence so purely arbitrary that it appears to have been the work of accident ; nor is it at all necessary for the learner to know that sequence, till he begin to consult a lexicon. Instead, therefore, of exacting the painful and, at this stage, needless effort of committing to memory the alphabetic series of characters, I placed before the pupil, as my first lesson on the board, the Greek letters in the order which nature and philosophy appeared to me to dictate. The vowels came first, seeing that they are mere emissions of sound from the larynx and open mouth, slightly modified by the position of the lips and tongue. They are in truth the first step, and scarcely a step, beyond the inarticulate cries of the lower animals.

With regard to the consonants, the natural order seems to be, that they should be classed according to the organs of voice employed in pronouncing them, and that precedence should be given, in the alphabetic enumeration, to the letters of each class, according as the organs recede from the lips inwards, first to the tip of the tongue, and then to the root of it. These considerations produced on the board the following programme of the Greek alphabet.\*

\* The vowels were sounded as in the Scotch mode of reading Greek, which is nearly the European ; and, in the consonants, the force of the letter was brought out by prefixing, not by appending, the vowel, as (*ι*) $\pi$ , which is the true way to shew the value of consonants in all elementary teaching : *ip*, *it*, *ik*, are more likely to convey to the mind of a child the force of the letters *p*, *t*, and *k*, than *pee*, *tee*, and *ka* ; and so with the rest.—See Note on p. 95. in App.

VOWELS.		CONSONANTS.	
Short, ε, ο	MUTES.	Labial, (lip sounds) π, β, φ, ψ	Vowels, 7
Long, η, ω		Linguo-palatal, (tip of tongue sounds) - τ, δ, θ, ζ	Mutes, 12
Doubtful, α, ι, υ		Guttural, (root of tongue sounds) - - ρ, γ, χ, ξ	Liquids, 4
		Liquids, or Semivowels, - λ, μ, ν, ρ	Sibilant, 1
		Sibilant, - - - -	24

This superseding of the common alphabet by an arrangement of letters, founded on a principle the truth of which every one could prove to himself by appealing to his own organs of voice and his own consciousness, found great favour with the pupils, and invested with interest a part of learning which is generally thought the most repulsive. The principle is equally applicable, and the advantage of applying it experimentally still greater, in the teaching of our own alphabet; but so little was the philosophy of teaching understood in those days, that, to the successive pupils even of a Rector's class, this view of the subject had all the attraction of novelty.

For example, the propriety of applying the term *mute* to the initial letter in each of the three orders, π, τ, ρ, = (i)p, (i)t, (i)k, was proved by inviting them to pronounce these letters without the help of any vowel either before or after them. One might then observe, in the attempt at π, a general compression of the lips, and in the case of τ and ρ, the lips more and more parted, and a muscular effort made, by the pressure of the tongue on the palate, to give out a sound; but in all the three cases, the effort was of no avail. This attempt at utterance, to which effect could be given only by prefixing or subjoining a vowel, they were instructed to consider

as the *radix* or primitive element of the other letters of the same order ranged alongside of it;—all of which spring from that *radix* by the superinduction of certain sounds, consequent upon certain modifications of the organs of voice. Writers of grammars enumerate, some *nine*, some, as in the above formula, *twelve* Greek characters under the head of *Mutæ*, (quæ volentem eloqui *mutum* reddunt;) but the truth is, that there are, strictly speaking, not more than *three* letters in the alphabet, whether it be ancient or modern, to which the term *mute* can be properly applied; those, to-wit, which stand the first in each of the orders—π, τ, χ. Of none but these three is it correct to affirm, that no attempt to give them audible utterance, without the help of a vowel before or after, will succeed. The letters originating from each of the three as their primordial element, are formed respectively in the manner following:—

The *second* letter in the labial order of mutes, β, springs from the first, by preluding to the articulation of π with a dull, heavy, inarticulate sound, produced by an act of the will, in the region of the throat.\* That the addition of this hollow muffled sound constitutes the difference between π and β, (*p* and *b*), any one may satisfy himself by first attempting *compressis labris* to pronounce the letter *p*, and then observing what takes place

\* This sound might be called, in Latin, *grave murmur*; in French, *un bruit sourd*. It is a sound which the native population of Wales, either from malconformation or early habit, find it difficult or impossible to utter, and accordingly pronounce words in which *b*, *d*, and *g* occur, as if they were spelt with *p*, *t*, and *k*. Shakspeare avails himself of this peculiarity to make the character of Fluellen, in the play of Henry V., more ridiculous. The same defect is observable among the Celtic population of our own Highlands. ‘*By God’s blessing*,’ comes from the lips of a Welshman or a Highlander in the shape of ‘*Py Cor’s plessin*!’

when a similar effort is made to pronounce the letter *b*, which may be called the labial *grave* sound. In making the effort, he will find that the hollow murmur precedes the act of opening the lips to give utterance to *p-ee*. By a similar addition of the *grave murmur* to *τ* and *κ*, *ι* and *κ*), the *grave* linguo-palatal and guttural, *δ* and *γ*, are formed.

The *third* letter in the labial order, *φ*, is elicited by moving the lips towards each other as in *π* or *β*, but, before they meet, giving egress to the voice in that peculiar breathing which we designate by the alphabetic character *h*, and the Greeks by the *spiritus asper*; and the result is the labial *aspirate* *φ* = *ph*, or, with the *grave* addition, the English *v*.

The *fourth* letter, or rather character, *ψ*, (for *ψ*, *ζ*, *ξ*, are not letters, but double consonants,) in the labial order of mutes, is formed by suddenly opening the compressed lips with the hissing sound *ç*, giving utterance to what may be called the labial *sibilant*. The same process applied to the linguo-palatal *τ* and guttural *κ*, originates the sound of *ζ* and *ξ*.

Thus we have the absolute mutes *π*, *τ*, *κ*, which may be denominated the *acute*, each with its accompaniment of *grave*, *aspirate*, and *sibilant*.

By those of my readers who are impatient of this long discussion, it may be thought impossible to excite interest among boys in treating such a subject, and difficult for the teacher himself to escape a smile at his expense; but even if these elementary *minutiæ* were less fruitful than they are in inferences and practical results, it would still be profitable to young minds to be led to observe for themselves, and to reflect; and if the master be animated by that enthusiasm which is more important to the discharge of his duties than

profound erudition, a sympathy will be established by look and gesture between the teacher and the taught, which will give to the *vox viva* of the former a fervour and felicity of illustration which he never can reach in the coldness and seclusion of his study.

The importance of such preliminary notions is made apparent in the subsequent study of Etymology. In tracing the affiliations and derivations of words in all languages, one cannot fail to observe, how often the letters belonging to the same order of mutes run into, and are interchanged with, each other, and how rarely the letter of one order lapses into the letter of another, in any derived or compounded word. Of this truth we find constant illustrations in the inflexions of Greek verbs. For example, we have the four labials, π, β, φ, ψ, forming, each in its turn, the characteristic letter in different parts of the verb βλαπτω, βλαψω, βεβλαφα, εβλαβον; and each of the four gutturals in the perf. pass. of λεγω,—λελεγμαi, λελεξαι, λελεχται—λελεχθον: and, in both cases, without a single deviation into the mute of a different order.

The same rule holds in tracing the descent of Latin words into the vocabularies and dialects of modern times. The different nations of Europe affect certain letters in preference to others; and accordingly, in words deduced from the Latin, we find them ringing the changes upon the different letters of the same order of mutes, each people following out its own predilections and habits of pronouncing, but seldom or ever stepping anomalously from one order into another. Thus the Latin *sapo* gives the Italian *sapone*, the French *savon*, the German *scife*, and the English *soap*.

A striking proof of the same principle in language

we have in the words which a child first uses to express the relation of parentage. Its earliest attempt to articulate is in pronouncing the letters *m* and *p*, which are the simplest of lip-sounds, and to the infant the easiest also, because he is guided to the imitation of these sounds by the eye as well as by the ear. Hence the words *mama* and *papa*, or slight modifications of them, are in the mouths of babes and sucklings, in every country and climate, and in all the dialects *μεροπων ανθρωπων*. The *papa* from the lips of the infant is the ground-work of all the varieties which have crept into the language of adults to express the relation of paternity; which varieties, however, are confined to *mutes* of the same order. Thus we have *pater* in Latin and Greek, *abba* in Chaldee, *père* and *padre* in French and Italian, *father* in English, and *vater* in German: and in the last three examples, similar interchanges of *t*, *d*, *th*, may also be remarked. In noting the maternal relation, it is a singular but not unaccountable fact, that the labial *m* is almost invariably and universally employed,—*mater*, *madre*, *mère*, *mutter*, *mother*, *mama*, *mammie*, &c.

So much for the Greek Alphabet.

THE next lessons on the board were schemes of the declensions of Nouns,—the first, the second, and the third declension successively. In these tabular views every unnecessary letter was dismissed; the terminations only were given, first of the nominatives in all their variety, and then of the oblique cases in the three numbers; and the tyro was accustomed to decline nouns while his eye was on the board, till he was able to do the same with the board reversed.



The tabular view of the Adjective exhibited the most ordinary varieties of termination in the nominative: as to the oblique cases, they were rendered easy by the familiarity already acquired with the declension of nouns. Additional facility was given by declining adjectives with nouns of different declensions, as *μελαινα ναυς*. The Comparison of adjectives, the Article, and the Pronoun, did not detain us long.

Thus, after mastering a very moderate number of tabular lessons, the beginners were prepared to face the formidable array of the Greek Verb.

Whether the *paradigma* of the verb be arranged, in any of our grammars, in a way that would have satisfied a learned Greek of the ancient world, may fairly be doubted; but with that question I had nothing to do in the High School. My task was to make my pupils adepts in the example given in Moor's Grammar. The least difficult part of that task was, to accustom the ear of the tyro to the constantly recurring sounds in the flexion of the modes. There is a sort of cadence in the -ω, -εις, ει, &c. and ω, ης, η, &c. to which the organs of voice speedily adapt themselves; and very little practice suffices to enable a boy to run down the numbers and persons, when he has once got hold of the first person singular of the modes and tenses. It was to this point, then,—the ready recollection of the first person singular of every mode and tense, and the nominative masculine of every participle,—that our efforts were mainly directed. With this view a scheme was sketched in chalk on the board of each of the three voices successively, similar to that which is found in the Eton Greek Grammar, but which, strange to say, was omitted in Moor's. The *first* tabular view

exhibited all the first persons singular of the active voice of  $\tau\upsilon\pi\tau\omega$ , written at full length within the little compartments or squares, formed by lines drawn horizontally and perpendicularly, like a multiplication table. Above the uppermost horizontal line were the names of the modes, and on the left margin of the perpendicular were the names of the tenses; so that the eye could easily read off any mode and tense that were called for, thus:

	Ind.	Subj.	Opt.	Imp.	Inf.	Partic.
Pr.						
Imperf.						
1. Fut.						
1. Aor.						
2. Fut.						
2. Aor.						
Perf.						
Plup.						

The *second* view of the verb was to present a board with nothing in each little square but the terminating letters; so that it became a means of exercising upon any verb in  $\omega$ . A *third* stage in the process was to dismiss even the terminations, and put nothing in the

squares but short lines, to indicate that the part was not wanting. These indicating lines were in chalks of different colours—blue, green, pink, and yellow—and in pairs of the same colour: the present and imperfect of one colour; the 1st future and 1st aorist of another; the 2d future and 2d aor. of a third, and the perfect and pluperf. of a fourth.

This was no idle or fanciful distinction, but founded on affinities real and important to the learner. Each pair of tenses has the same characteristic letter;  $\pi$  in  $\tau\pi\tau\omega$ , and  $\epsilon\tau\pi\tau\omicron\nu$ ;  $\psi$  in  $\tau\psi\omega$  and  $\epsilon\tau\psi\alpha$ ;  $\pi$  again in  $\tau\pi\tilde{\omega}$ ,  $\epsilon\tau\pi\omicron\nu$ ; and  $\varphi$  in  $\tau\epsilon\tau\varphi\alpha$  and  $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\varphi\epsilon\iota\nu$ ; and these characteristic letters belong all to the same order of mutes. The identity of colour in the cognate tenses linked them together in the memory; and the diversity served to distinguish the rest from each other. The board in this stage exhibited nothing but intersecting lines of white chalk, dividing the whole space into squares, within which were short lines of different colours, but no letters. It served, therefore, as a means of examining on all the three Voices. Nothing but experience will carry conviction of the facility which this contrivance gave to the learner who had gone through the previous steps. While his eye was intently fixed on the board, the coloured lines conjured up, as it were, to his mental vision the words which he used to find in the same spot on the lettered board. Each coloured line was the symbol of three words, differing according to the Voice examined on; and one boy at the board pointing with a rod, while another and another in different parts of the class were called to answer, formed not only a searching, but an amusing mode of examination. The last part of the process for mastering the Greek verb was,

to dispense with the board altogether and examine *viva voce*; and those who had gone through the previous steps successfully found in this no difficulty. Another tabular view of the Greek verb, in which the tenses were arranged, like a family tree, according to their supposed affiliation, one to another, was reserved for the whole class, at a later period of the Session.

Thus ended the summary process of initiation in the elements of Greek.

I was now enabled to arrange the whole body of Greek students into two classes, an Upper, and a Lower; the former consisting of the pupils of a second year's attendance, the latter made up of those of the first year who had learned a little Greek in the fourth class and the novices who had gone through the tabular process. As it happened not unfrequently that the best of the new comers were superior to the worst of my second year's pupils, examinations and trials were instituted to adjust the scale of talent and progress; and at no period of the year, except the close, was it impossible for a boy high in the lower class to be promoted to the upper, or an idler of the upper to be *motus tribu*.

The business of the Junior class was grammar, and simple construing, with accurate parsing. After the tabular teaching of the first month, Moor's Grammar was commenced with the now united sections. The most important rules were prescribed to be got by heart, in the way required for pupils who were in progress to the University; for which this class might be considered as a nursery. One set of the rules, however, I omitted altogether,—those for the contraction of syllables; and as this is generally considered as the most successful part of Professor

Moor's Grammar, it may be well to account for the omission.

Moor's rules for contraction are, I admit, ingeniously conceived, and neatly expressed; and as a scheme embracing every concourse of vowels, it is perhaps unrivalled. Nevertheless, in practical teaching, I found it unmanageable. To learn the rules by heart and acquire the habit of applying them readily, demanded a sacrifice of time which appeared to me much too great for an object so subordinate. Accordingly, in search of something more useful in practice, I set out upon the principle, that it is not necessary to have a rule for every contraction. There are certain concourses of vowels, the contracting of which is so obvious that it may be safely left to the guidance of the ear. Such, for example, are  $\phi\lambda\epsilon\omega$  into  $\phi\lambda\tilde{\omega}$ ,  $\phi\lambda\epsilon\epsilon\iota\varsigma$  into  $\phi\lambda\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ ;  $\phi\lambda\epsilon\sigma\mu\iota$  into  $\phi\lambda\sigma\tilde{\mu}\iota$ ;  $\phi\lambda\epsilon\sigma\upsilon\sigma\alpha$  into  $\phi\lambda\sigma\tilde{\upsilon}\sigma\alpha$ . In what cases a rule might be dispensed with, I did not determine by my own opinion or authority, but appealed to experiment, by pronouncing the word and calling for its contracted form from the dullest novices. When *they* did it without hesitation, and all in one way, it seemed to me that a rule was not required for what nature herself dictated infallibly.

Leaving out, therefore, self-evident and unmistakable forms, as well as some others of exceedingly rare occurrence, I reduced the ten pages of Moor's Grammar to the following *formulae*,—so short and simple as to be easily remembered and readily applied, and amply sufficient to guide the *young* Hellenist through the labyrinth of Greek contractions. In this part of grammar, and the same thing may be said of many other parts, it is a mistake to burden the memory of boys with rules which they will seldom or never have

occasion to apply.\* Rare cases and exceptions are better left to be explained, when they occur, *inter docendum*.

## CONTRAHUNTUR

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. <i>ao et oa</i> in $\tilde{o}$ ,  | - | - | - | - | τιμασμεν—τιμῶμεν.<br>Λητοα—Λητω.              |
| 2. <i>eo et os et oo</i> in $\tilde{ou}$   | - | - | - | - | ὄσσεον—ὄστοῦν.<br>εδηλος—εδηλῶ.<br>νοος—νοῦς. |
| 3. <i>ea</i> in $\tilde{\eta}$   | - | - | - | - | γα—γῆ.  |
| sed <i>ea purum et pea lmae</i> in $\tilde{a}$   |   |   |   |   | { Πειραια—Πειραιᾶ.<br>πορφυρεα—πορφυρᾶ.       |
| 4. <i>es</i> (e duplex) in $\tilde{e}$   | - | - | - | - | φιλεετε—φιλεῖτε                               |
| 5. <i>as et aη</i> in $\alpha$   | - | - | - | - | ετιμας—ετιμα.<br>τιμαη—τιμα.                  |
| 6. Accusativus pluralis contractus est similis nominativo contracto—nom. αληθεες—θεῖς,—acc. αληθεας—αληθεῖς. † |   |   |   |   |   |

In the course of November, the two sections of the Lower Greek, brought together under the circumstances I have stated, were completely amalgamated, and many of those who had begun the alphabet in October, stood high in the united class before Christ-

\* Take, for one example among a thousand, the conclusion of Ruddiman's Latin rule for the gender of nouns in *n*,—

—*Sindon petit hæc et ædon,*  
*Alcyonem junges, data postea queis comes icon.*

How many of those who were punished, as many there were in my young days, for not learning by heart these difficult and barbarous lines, ever had occasion to apply the rule to any of the four words for which it is given? It was right in Ruddiman to state the fact; but the wisdom of teaching it to tyros may well be questioned.

† A 7th Rule may be left to the discretion of the teacher.  
7. If there be *three* vowels before contraction, and the last be either *ι* or *υ*, it is discarded altogether, unless when the contracted form admits of the *ι* being subscribed, as τιμαου—τιμῶ, δηλοειν—δηλουν, τιμασιμι—τιμῶμι.

mas. Nor did they find much difficulty in mastering the lessons of that class, which were confined to Greek Testament, and Dalzel's *Analecta Minora*.

The Upper Greek, being composed of boys of good promise who had made considerable proficiency, presented more striking shades of difference and greater capabilities of advancement. With them the standard books were Homer's *Iliad*, and the prose volume of the *Collectanea Majora* which contains extracts from Herodotus, Xenophon, Thucydides, &c. To secure accurate preparation among the senior boys, and habituate them to refer every compound word to its root, (and in Greek, above most other languages, etymology is important and fruitful in results,) they were required to shew, along with every day's preparation, written *derivations*, as they were called, that is, the parsing and parentage of every important word in the lesson. The mere inspection of these manuscripts by a master who was known to be on his guard against imposition, gave the strongest assurance of pains bestowed.

In spite of the demands on their time by the various business of the Latin class, there was always a select band among the Upper Greek, so fond of the language and so proud of their proficiency in it, that they took up *Private Studies* with great avidity. The book prescribed for those voluntary readings was the *Iliad*; and the quantity prepared continued increasing from year to year, as the system was improved and the taste for Greek diffused, till, at the Examination in 1817, two pupils professed the whole *Iliad*, on which they were publicly examined by very competent judges, and on passages of their selection. In 1819, there were three who professed the *Iliad*; in 1820, four,—be-

sides one, (the late John Brown Paterson\*) who, having read the Iliad the session before, professed and was examined on the whole nine books of Herodotus. The private readings in the Iliad were understood to be performed without the assistance of a Latin version; and if such version was appended to any student's copy of Homer, he was bound to shew it sealed up, before he began, and again, with the seal unbroken, at the close of the Session.

Every Greek scholar knows, that if one book of Homer be read with very strict attention to the parsing, and every word pursued through all the forms and phases which the master genius of the poet compels it to assume to give fit utterance to his noble conceptions, the preparing of the rest becomes comparatively easy. Accordingly, the readers of the Iliad were enjoined to have a paper-book with a page or two allotted to each letter of the Greek alphabet; and for easy reference, to have an Index Alphabet catching the eye, on the outer margin, like a merchant's ledger. After they had acquired some familiarity with the diction of Homer, they were advised to insert in this little lexicon, every word that was new to them, and for which they were obliged to have recourse to Schrevelius or Hederic. These *vacables* (if I may be allowed to use a Scotch word which deserves to be English,) gradually accumulated till the little lexicon almost superseded the use of any other for Homer. A well-kept and well-filled register of this kind was one of the proudest distinctions of a Greek student.

\* —quem, non virtutis egentem,  
Abstulit atra dies et funere mersit acerbo.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### GEOGRAPHICAL DISCIPLINE.

THE introduction of Ancient Geography into the curriculum of High School study, was, like that of Greek, a happy innovation of my predecessor's upon its original constitution. But as the manner of teaching geography which I was led to adopt differed materially, not only from his plan, but from any other, so far as I have been able to learn, which, till then, had been practised in the public schools of Britain, it is right that I should preface the details of geographical discipline with an exposition of the principles on which I proceeded, especially as I conceive them to lie at the foundation of all successful teaching of geography, whether it be ancient or modern.\*

\* Here follows, in the MS. of 1823, a long dissertation, intended to elucidate the first principles of the art of communicating geographical instruction in such a manner as to interest the minds of the young. But with this discussion I shall not try the patience of the reader; partly, because the views it presents have no longer the novelty which they possessed when I first began to apply them in practical teaching; and partly, because I have stated the substance of them pretty fully in the Introduction to "Outlines of Geography, principally Ancient," published a few years ago. The portion of memoranda omitted in the text was expanded long ago into some Lectures on the subject, which are now delivered

‘I. In studying the geography of any country, the first thing to be done, after settling its boundaries, its length and breadth, and its latitude and longitude, is to acquire a knowledge, not of its civil divisions, which are conventional and fluctuating, but of its physical characters. Of these characters, which are permanent and impressed on the globe by the hand of nature, the most striking are the following :—

‘1. The line of coast, where the country is maritime: 2. The mountains, either single, or in groups, or in long ranges: 3. The rivers, with their complement of tributary streams; and, 4. The valleys or *basins* which are scooped out and enclosed between the mountain ranges, and are at once watered and drained by the rivers and their tributaries. To be made acquainted with these physical features of a country, their names, numbers, and relative positions, is as necessary to the young geographer as a knowledge of the bones and great blood-vessels of the human frame is to the young anatomist. It is, in both cases, the foundation on which subsequent acquirements ought to be reared.

‘II. When the learner has been thus made ac-

in the Junior Humanity Class in the University. I shall, therefore, confine myself in the text to a condensed enunciation of the principles alluded to, such as may enable the reader to understand and judge of the methods of teaching which I am about to describe. And as I had the honour of delivering one of these lectures lately to the Edinburgh Local Association of the Educational Institute of Scotland, and the Secretary, once a distinguished pupil of my own, gave an official report of the lecture to the Institute; I have adopted that document into the text, as embodying, substantially and lucidly, the statement which I wished to present to my readers.

quainted with the physical aspect of the country, with the principal chains of mountains, and with the names and courses of the main rivers, the next step is to follow each of these rivers from the source downwards, observing as we go along what cities or towns of importance are found either divided by it, or close upon it, or at a moderate distance from either bank. If the same process be adopted with the principal tributary streams, and if, in addition, the towns and ports on the sea-coast, where the country is maritime, be noted and named in their order, it will be found that very few places of consequence have been omitted, and that their positions are advantageously fixed in the memory when they are thus associated with the rivers, and seas, and basins, to which they belong.

‘ III. It is not till we have completed this outline of what has a real substantive existence in nature; that the attention of the pupil ought to be called to those divisions and sections of the territory into provinces, circles, counties, and shires, which are purely arbitrary, and have no natural character or assured permanence.

‘ IV. In teaching Geography as a branch of general knowledge, it is a mistake to aim at great minuteness of detail. The subject ought not to be exhausted.

‘ V. As, on the one hand, the memory should not be overloaded with a multitude of mere names, so, on the other, as many impressive associations as possible should be connected with the details which *are* given. In the case of towns, for example, the striking peculiarities, both in their natural, civil, political, and commercial history—all that can serve to paint them to

the imagination, and distinguish them from one another by something more than the name—should find a place either in the text-book itself, or in the oral demonstration of the teacher.

‘VI. With the same view of giving to the knowledge communicated a firmer hold on the memory, Modern Geography should go hand in hand with Ancient, and each be made to throw light upon the other. A very great number of modern names of places are corrupted forms of the ancient appellations, sometimes so altered that the identity of the two is not readily detected; and the modern name may often be traced back, through various changes, to some peculiarity in the natural or civil history of the place.

‘VII. Finally, it will contribute to give additional interest and impressiveness to geographical instruction, as well as to improve the taste, and store the mind with rich imagery and pleasing associations, if a selection of passages from the poets of antiquity, or of modern times, in which they describe, or allude to, either the local peculiarities or the mythological and political history of the places and scenes enumerated, be brought under the eye of the learner, and made so familiar to him as to recur along with the names, and even to be committed to memory.’

There is, no doubt, an immense extent of the surface of the globe, to which the river-and-basin system cannot be profitably applied. In the Karroos and sandy deserts of Africa, in the parched solitudes of Arabia and Persia, in the table land of Central Asia, in the Llanos and Pampas and Savannahs of America, in the Steppes of Russia both European and Asiatic, and even in the northern parts of Germany and

Prussia, it would be vain to look for either river or basin. But these interminable wastes, condemned apparently to everlasting sterility, possess no interest to the young geographer, beyond the fact of their existence, and their position relative to the habitable parts of the earth. Still less claim have they on the attention of the youthful student of the classics, seeing that to the ancients they were entirely unknown. The countries inhabited, subdued, colonized and civilized by them, all, with two exceptions,\* touched in some point or other the waters of the Mediterranean, or of its cognate seas; and from the shores of the Mediterranean have come to us, as Dr. Johnson long ago remarked, all our religion, almost all our laws, almost all our arts, almost everything that sets us above savages. Now, to the countries bordering on those inland seas,—fertilized as they are and beautified by innumerable streams, and where scarce ‘a mountain rears its head unsung,’—the river and basin system is eminently applicable; and as it was with those countries I had chiefly to do, it occurred to me that I might take advantage of it, to give interest and impressiveness to my geographical lessons.

If the soundness of the principles stated above be granted, it follows that an engraved map,—having its full complement of provinces, counties, and towns, with their names at full length in letters of all sizes, its dotted lines of boundary, its meridians, and its parallels of latitude,—is not the proper instrument to use in teaching the geography of a country; but that it ought to be reserved, like dictionaries in learning a language, for occasional consultation and reference.

\* Britain, and the Conquests of Alexander the Great.

Accordingly, I placed before my pupils, instead of a crowded and perplexing map, a large black board, having an unpolished non-reflecting surface, on which was inscribed in bold relief a delineation of the country, with its mountains, rivers, lakes, cities, and towns of note. The delineation was executed with chalks of different colours. The outline of coast was drawn with white chalk, faintly shaded on the outside with blue; light green was employed for the mountains, light blue for the rivers and lakes, and pink for the towns. There was no marking on the board which did not indicate some existing reality, something that had visible and tangible properties; and of such objects, those only had a place which were intended to be taught. No line, letter, or name appeared,—no index of any thing which had not a prototype in nature, unless crosses of red chalk here and there, to point out the site of a famous battle, be considered as an exception.

There was thus exhibited on the easel a sort of fac-simile of the country, so limited however in the number of details, as neither to distract the eye, nor confound the understanding, nor overload the memory. The varieties of colour, each appropriate to the visible appearance of the object represented, were themselves no small help, both to the imagination and the memory, in picturing out and recalling to the learner's mind the principal features of a country. The teacher, then, while every boy's eye was fixed on the board, directed his pointer to the mountain ranges, with their highest peaks and offsets, not failing to notice any peculiarity in their appearance and structure. He next traced the courses of the main

rivers and their principal tributaries, from fountain-head to embouchure. Then, remounting to their sources, he named, as he descended with the current, the towns that were upon their banks, and, along with their names, mentioned also such particulars concerning them as were worth knowing and likely to be remembered,—their ancient and modern designations, the sieges they had sustained, the battles fought under their walls, the remains of antiquity they contained, the distinguished men they had given birth to, and anything else remarkable in their natural or civil history which might tend to give them individuality, and take a hold on the memory. It contributed not a little to the same effect, that each town was no longer an insulated locality, with nothing to refer it to but the county or province to which it belonged: it was associated now with the river it was upon; and the rest of the towns farther down the river, as they succeeded each other, were bound together in the memory, as it were by a common tie.

To prove how much the system I have been endeavouring to explain tends to simplify and give interest to the study of Geography, I will take, as an example, the first country which presents itself in making our proposed circuit of the Mediterranean from one pillar of Hercules (the rock of Gibraltar), to the other (the African Ceuta);—I mean the Spanish Peninsula.

Were a traveller to land at Santander, a sea-port on the Bay of Biscay, in the province of Asturias, with the intention of making his way directly south to Gibraltar, he would have to cross successively five ranges of mountains, running all from north-east to

south-west, at great distances from each other; and in travelling across each of the intermediate spaces, he would find himself alternately descending and ascending, and would have, as he descended, the current of all the mountain torrents and tributary streams *with* him, and, as he ascended, all *against* him,—travelling, in the former case *secundo flumine*, and *adverso* in the latter. And, ere he reached the end of his journey, he would have traversed four *basins* or broad valleys, each having a large river occupying its lowest level, running parallel to the mountain ranges which enclose it, and receiving all the streams that flow down their sides. And he might add to his enumeration of basins what is equivalent to a fifth, the declivity which he first ascended from the shore of the Bay of Biscay, and the slope which brought him at last to the shores of the Mediterranean.

Again, let us suppose that our traveller crosses Spain in a different direction,—from west to east,—and that he starts from Lisbon, bound for Valencia. Instead of the frequent ascendings and descendings of his former journey, he will now follow the course of the Tagus upwards by a long and gentle *ascent*, noting a number of remarkable towns in his way, till that river gradually dwindles to a slender filament of water, and he reaches at last its fountain-head on the side or summit of the lofty mountain called Sierra Molina. Pursuing his course eastward, he will not have advanced far till he fall in with another rivulet, but flowing in a direction opposite to that which he has left. This is the infant *Turia*, the modern Guadalaviar, by following the course and current of which he arrives at Valencia, on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. The Sierra Molina is thus proved to be one of the summits of that crest of moun-



tain and high ground which, stretching from north to south, forms the water-shed of the Peninsula, sending forth streams from its eastern declivity to the Mediterranean, and from its western to the Atlantic. It is from this back-bone of the country that those ranges of mountains spring, like ribs from the spine, which he crossed in his southern journey.

It was not till now, when, by views and processes such as I have described, there had been erected, in the mind of the learner, a sort of frame-work or *effigies* of the Peninsula as it came from the hand of nature, that, before quitting the tabular delineation of Spain, I marked off, with dotted lines, the kingdoms and principalities into which it had been subdivided by man, from the time when it was a Roman province down to the present day; and took occasion to follow chronologically the fortunes of its inhabitants through the different epochs of their history, under the successive visitations of the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Goths, Visigoths, Vandals, and Saracens.

Though I was sanguine enough in my anticipations of good from this new mode of teaching Geography, yet the actual results far exceeded my expectation. Not only were the finer spirits of the class attracted, but many boys who, from indifferent previous instruction, had conceived a rooted aversion to Latin and Greek, sprang forward with alacrity in this new career, and shewed, by their attitude and eye, a degree of attention and interest which I had in vain attempted to excite in them when the other lessons were in hand. Every particle of information I had given concerning any locality, every anecdote I had told, was forthcoming the moment the board was exhibited and the pointer

on the spot; even the illustrations quoted from the Latin classics or our own poets, were hunted out and committed to memory. Nor was this all; boys—often from the lowest benches in the class—accepted the invitation to construct skeleton-maps of their own in imitation of those on the board; and they arrived by practice at a surprising degree of accuracy and neatness of execution. The best of these performances were fitted upon pasteboard, and hung round the room; and when the head-knowledge of the drawer was found equal to his skill in the handiwork, he was privileged to act as monitor, and to teach the substance of his own map to his fellows. So captivating was the instruction conveyed in this shape, that boys often petitioned for leave to remain in the school-room during play-hours; some for the sport of examining one another on the skeleton map, others to practise the art of making chalk outlines on a black board. And such dexterity and expertness did they acquire in the use of the crayons, that I abandoned the practice of drawing on this board myself, and substituted the beautiful specimens produced by my pupils for my own clumsy performances. Not a few, becoming enamoured of the study, executed maps in Indian ink, with a fuller complement of localities, and with the names inserted; and several of these, finished off with consummate taste and skill more than thirty years ago, may still be seen adorning the walls of the Humanity class-room.\*

\* For a particular detail of the manner in which this mode of teaching Geography was applied to the other countries bordering on the Mediterranean, and in particular, how it was brought to bear on the explanation and illustration of the classics, I must again refer the reader to the volume mentioned before, p. 109,

## CHAPTER IX.

### ON THE DIFFERENCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CLASSICAL SCHOOLS IN ENGLAND AND IN SCOTLAND, AND THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BOTH.

THE acknowledged difference of national character on the opposite sides of the Tweed, may be considered partly as the cause, and partly as the effect, of the very marked diversity in the modes of public education, and the fashion of public schools in the two countries.

All the great schools of England, how widely soever they may differ in the details of teaching, agree in this respect, that the boys are separated from their parents and their homes, and form, with the head-master and his assistants, a sort of small community apart. If it be an old endowed school, such as Eton or Westminster, the boys on the foundation are boarded and lodged in a Dormitory or Long Chamber, and the rest are placed either with certain of the masters, or in what are called Dames' Houses, which are so far under control and superintendence, that each of them is visited every day by one of the masters, who calls a muster-roll of the inmates and sees that they be locked up for the night. An imaginary line round the place marks the 'bounds,' beyond which it is against the law

of the school to go, however consistent it may be with the practice of the scholars. There are certain amusements too, such as riding, driving, shooting, and angling, which are prohibited under severe penalties. The masters, in short, act as superintendants of the general conduct of the pupils, as well as of their proficiency in classics, and a vigilant police is kept up by frequent calling of 'absences.'

In Scotch grammar schools, on the other hand, the school-boys are all what are called in England "home-boarders" or "day-scholars"—a description of pupils little known then, and not encouraged. Our public schools are places of resort to the youth during the hours of teaching, after which they separate, each to his home; and whether that home be the dwelling-place of his parents, or of some friend, or a common lodging-house, he is equally removed from all cognizance of the master, whose charge of him extends not beyond the precincts of the school.

The most obvious consequence of the English arrangement is, a much more intimate society among the boys themselves. They dwell, sometimes to the number of eighty or ninety, in the same boarding-house, and all the boarding-houses are within so small a compass, that every boy in school is known to every other. They encounter one another so frequently in the daily intercourse of life, that character is rapidly developed and formed in this little world. A boy who has been spoiled at home, and arrives at school with an extravagant estimate of his own consequence, meets with such rebuffs at every turn, that his self-importance is soon abated, or he is fain at least to conceal it; nay, as he gains experience, he becomes in his turn an acute

observer of the foibles and follies of his neighbours. Thus, by constant attrition as it were, the angularities of character are rubbed off, and a boy acquires a knowledge of mankind, and a self-possession, which, it must be admitted, betrays itself occasionally in petulance, proneness to *quiz*, and knowingness in vice; but, in the better class of pupils, is shewn in ease and manliness of manner, in freedom from presumptuousness and affectation, and in a perception of the ridiculous in conduct and character, which, though strong enough to observe it in others, is mainly exercised in avoiding it themselves. In short, a boy feels very early his place in society, and that he must not expect others to yield more than is his due in *their* estimation, not in his own;—a lesson of no small importance to the sons of the rich and the high-born. To this we may trace much of the influence which these schools have had in moulding the aristocracy of England, and correcting many of the faults to which the condition of their birth exposes them. Few things, indeed, have contributed more to produce that peculiar phasis of human character, of which an English gentleman is so admirable a specimen.

The practice of *fagging*,—that is, of every member of the higher forms of the school having a general command over the services of the lower boys, and having one boy in particular attached to him as a sort of domestic,—is so interwoven with English habits, that it is scarcely possible, even were it desirable, to abolish it. It is that part of the system which appears most objectionable in theory; and instances are quoted of the abuses which it has given rise to. But it ought

to be remembered, that it is the abuses only that we hear of, while the salutary effects are mixed up with the general results of the whole discipline, and are neither so striking nor so easily stated. Like so many of the time-honoured usages and institutions of England, it may be said to work well, against all reason and all theory. But as this is a dangerous principle to admit, and may be pleaded in vindication of every abuse, it is better to rest the defence, or apology, of *fagging*, on the argument that in large assemblages of boys living in close contact and far from their natural guardians, a regulated and well-defined authority—such as in a vast majority of cases will be exercised according to a certain law, unwritten indeed but not the less binding—is greatly to be preferred to the unrestricted right of the strongest. Big boys are doubtless now and then found who make a cruel and capricious use of their power, but there is a check to this abuse in the custom of the school. In numberless instances the older boy is the protector and asserter of the rights of his *fag*; and though he himself may occasionally maltreat him, he will allow nobody else to do so. Besides, to the numerous pupils of these schools who are born to affluence, and doomed to be surrounded with obsequious dependents, this is often their only chance, at the time when the character is being formed for life, of profiting by the ‘sweet uses of adversity.’

There are disadvantages, however, attending the English system of school-management, which it is impossible to overlook. Among these I fear we must reckon the danger of early initiation into vice. Such congregations of boys, associating only with one an-

other, are a fit soil for 'things rank and gross in nature' to spring up in; and though the purer spirits come out from the test to which their principles and good habits are subjected, like gold seven times tried, yet the greater proportion of ordinary minds run considerable risk of receiving a taint, from which they do not easily recover.

The same condition of things is apt to engender an indifference, and even aversion, to the studies they are sent to prosecute. Boys collected in great numbers in one place, far from home and the society of those who have a natural influence over them, are but too apt to employ their time and talents in inventing schemes of active amusement or playful mischief, and to make the sedentary occupations of the desk and the study a subordinate and very summary process. This tendency is not a little favoured by the obligation the masters are under to proscribe and if possible prevent many sports, innocent and healthful in themselves, which the boys are accustomed to engage in at home, in their fathers' company, during the holidays. The very prohibition begets a desire to enjoy them, and disposes the boys to regard the masters in the light of so many tyrants arrayed against their interests, debarring them from pastimes which even *they* must look upon as harmless, and forcing upon them instruction for which they have no relish. Hence the prevalent feeling is, to take as little as may be of the learning, and have all they can of the amusement,—to reduce the former to the *minimum*, and raise the latter to the *maximum*. And hence, too, the danger of a struggle between master and pupil, each pulling opposite ways. The

seeds are sown of a hostility which is only prevented, by the strictest school-discipline, from shewing itself in open resistance to authority. This proneness to rebel may act, indeed, as a check in preventing abuse of power on the part of the master; but the evil preponderates. Some dexterity, and a happy temperament, are required in the teacher to save him from being an object of general dislike. One of his best securities against it, is to impress his pupils with the idea that he is acting, not spontaneously nor always with a willing mind, but as the instrument, and under the compulsion, of a stern necessity. In this way, even while he is inflicting punishments, which it would be difficult to reconcile with his own notions of what is reasonable and just, he may stand acquitted of vindictiveness, by appearing as the minister of fate, appointed to enforce a system of discipline which has been established for ages,—a system which, for that very reason, is submitted to, by young Englishmen as well as old, without examination and without complaint.

It is of general tendencies to evil that I speak: there are of course numerous and honourable exceptions,—many who, were the system ever so bad, would turn out well, not by that system, but in spite of it; but the prevailing notion on the subject undoubtedly is, that teachers are task-masters, who are to be thwarted, eluded, mystified, and outwitted by every lawful, or rather by every possible, means. The boy who is at all times ready to embark in any scheme of strenuous idleness, and the readier if it has a seasoning of mischief in it, is a general favourite. Want of lesson brings no discredit. High talent, indeed, dis-



played in the business of the school, is omnipotent with boys, and never fails to attract universal and unenvying admiration; but the assiduous student who makes no blaze must carefully conceal his love of study, if he would escape having an opprobrious epithet coupled with his name.

One means of counteracting a tendency so manifest would be, to convey instruction in a very attractive form. But to this the nature of the school-room arrangements at Eton is a bar. The plan of teaching several forms or sections of the school in one room, has been already adverted to as a security against excess in punishment or indulgence of passion; but it is evident that, upon this plan, the business can scarcely go beyond plain, dry construing and parsing: so that, however well qualified a master may be to captivate the minds of youth by apt and varied illustrations, and to communicate the enthusiasm which he himself feels, the thing is next to impossible, not only from the conversational tone assumed to prevent interference, but from the presence of other masters, and the dread of being laughed at both by them and his pupils.\*

The Scottish school system admits of no such mutual and general acquaintance. The boys of one class are scarcely known, even by name, to those of the

\* I have spoken, in the text, of things at Eton as they were known to me more than forty years ago. Much, I am aware, has been done to counteract evil tendencies under the able management of the present Provost and Head-master; and, for the removal of whatever else is amiss, we may look hopefully to those authorities of the school who have already succeeded in abolishing the ridiculous farce of Montem, and in substituting the 'Eton Geography and Atlas' for the maps and text of Pomponius Mela.

other four classes; and even members of the same class, if it be very numerous, remain so little acquainted as to pass each other on the street without recognition, unless some other tie bring them together than the mere circumstance of being both taught by one and the same master. This was the case in the Rector's class also, up to the time when the adoption of monitorial divisions more thoroughly intermingled the members of it, by bringing them into closer and more frequent intercourse, and thus presenting opportunities of becoming acquainted, and of developing character. Still, however, this intercourse was within the walls of the school-room, where there could be little of that free and unreserved intercommunication of thought which cements boyish friendships; and the play-ground was too confined, and had too few facilities for youthful sports, to tempt many boys to linger or re-assemble there at play-hours; so that unless proximity of dwelling, or the mutual acquaintance of their parents, brought them together at other times, the bonds which connected all the pupils of the same class was but slight, and led to few intimacies. If, however, by this system, boys have less frequent occasions of acquiring an early knowledge of the world, and a certain easy and unembarrassed demeanour, they escape also, it must be allowed, some risk of evil and contamination.

For, in the first place, there is no tendency to cabal against the master; not only because the boys are less together, but because he, not being called on to interfere with their amusements, or with their manner of employing the hours when they are out of school, is not so liable to incur their dislike or aver-

sion. If, on a whole holiday, he meet one of his pupils on horseback, in a gig, with a fishing-rod in his hand, or even a gun over his shoulder, he wishes him a pleasant ride, or good sport, and passes on. This, no doubt, takes the responsibility of the boy's *moral* conduct, in a great measure, off the shoulders of the master, and lays it more heavily on the parent's, tutor's, or guardian's; and of this they may possibly complain. But to the master it is an incalculable advantage, not merely by relieving him of a very odious and irksome duty, but by putting it more in his power to secure the affections, and through them to influence the conduct and accelerate the proficiency, of his pupils. Again, the boys of a Scotch Class, having no projects in common to which the master is not a party, are more likely to regard the school business as of prime importance, and to have it uppermost in their thoughts, both in school and at home.

When school is over for the day, the English youth repair, either to the play-ground in large bodies, or in little groups, each to pursue its own object; and, towards evening, all retire to their respective boarding-houses, where they are consigned to study or each other's company for the rest of the day. Scotch schoolboys, on the contrary, disperse in all directions after school-hours, and see no more of each other till next morning. That part of the interval which is not given to preparation for the morrow, or to play with their particular associates, is spent in the society of their parents. This may be thought but a bad exchange for the company of their equals; and when one considers the folly and ignorance, the extremes of indulgence and severity, so common among

parents where their children are concerned, one is tempted to think that, for their mutual benefit, they can scarcely see too little of each other. Nevertheless, the growing intelligence of the age, and the importance now generally attached to the right training of youth, secure, upon the whole, a reversion of good from this daily intercourse between the old and the young. And if this be true generally, I may say, without undue partiality to my native place, that nowhere is this reversion of good likely to be greater than in Edinburgh, not only from the general diffusion of education among the people of Scotland, but from the peculiar circumstances of that city. The proportion of the population who follow liberal professions is nowhere else so great. The town derives so much of its wealth and consequence from being the seat of the Courts of Law and of the University, and so little from trade or manufactures, that literature is the fashion of the place ; and among the society which a boy meets with at his father's house, he is likely to imbibe much useful knowledge, or, at least, to hear such importance attached to the possession of it, and such respect paid to intellectual distinction, as can hardly fail to quicken his exertions to obtain it. This effect I could distinctly trace among the successive members of the Rector's class, in the profound attention with which every kind of general information was listened to. I was encouraged, by observing this appetite for knowledge, to dilate occasionally on topics rather suggested by, than bearing upon, the lesson of the day. Classical scholars do not require to be told how frequently, in construing and prelecting on the choice writers of antiquity, opportunities present themselves

to the teacher of awakening the spirit of inquiry, and giving proper direction to the moral perceptions of the young. By commenting on the events and characters which come before them in the course of the daily readings, boys may be guided, the more surely because insensibly, to correct notions and abiding impressions of the right and the wrong in principle and in conduct:—moral training much more effectual than a formal array of precepts and rules for good behaviour; to which, when addressed directly to them, and professedly for their especial benefit, they are but too apt to turn a deaf ear.

I have spoken only of what may be called the external conformation of the schools in the two countries, as it affects the habits, and feelings, and manners of the youth. To describe and compare the didactic part of the discipline, the details of the school-room, the number and nature of the subjects taught, the books used, the modes of teaching, and the professional preparation, condition, and character of the teachers, in both countries, would require a volume of itself, and would be foreign to the purpose of this chapter.

A school organization which should embrace the advantages, and steer clear of the disadvantages, of the Scotch and English systems of management, is a thing to be wished rather than looked for. Diversity of national character, the prepossessions of each people in favour of its own plan, local arrangements not easy to alter, and perhaps a remnant of national jealousy still surviving in some minds from the feuds and antipathies of former days—all conspire to prevent such a consummation. But a

study and comparison of the two may suggest hints for partial and local improvement.

It would be no less ineffectual than presumptuous in me to speculate on the means of ameliorating the public schools of England : but I can scarcely be considered as stepping out of my province, if I submit, for the consideration of the authorities who preside over the grammar schools of Scotland, a few suggestions, or rather queries ; with special reference, however, to that seminary which I was so long connected with, both as pupil and teacher.\*

\* I have omitted after this a considerable portion of the original text, which relates to some local changes in the old High School building, and certain class arrangements consequent thereon ; an omission which even the author regards as *hiatus non valde defensus*. In what follows, something is no doubt left which the reader will think had been better consigned to the same category. But my wish at least has been, that in speaking on a subject in itself local and temporary, and the interest of which is gone by, nothing should be retained which did not involve some principle which might be useful hereafter in the erection and management of schools.

## CHAPTER X.

### SUGGESTIONS AND QUERIES.

THE master evil in the discipline of the High School has always been the want of classification according to proficiency, in the classes subsidiary to the Rector's. This defect I spoke of, in the first chapter, as meeting me at the very outset of my labours, and acting injuriously on the composition of the Rector's class, inasmuch as it sent up to the highest form in the school, a number of pupils very imperfectly acquainted with the first principles of Latin grammar, who nevertheless had been, during the four previous years, members of the same classes which furnished me with some of my best scholars.

It has often been tauntingly asked, by those who are not friendly to classical education, how it comes to pass that so large a proportion of the pupils of the High School leave it, after a course of five or six years' instruction, without more than a smattering of the language to which the chief part of their time had been devoted. Admitting the truth of the allegation, and there is no use in denying a fact so notorious, one may conceive a defender of the school to argue in reply, with a fair show of reason, in the first place,

that, in any system of scholastic training to which numerous classes of boys are subjected, there must always be some who take the lead and others who lag behind, be the subject taught what it may; and, secondly, that, even when the language in question has not been mastered, it by no means follows that the time and labour of the student have been thrown away. There is much truth in the argument; but it cannot be considered as a satisfactory answer to the question put, unless it could be proved, that the number of failures is not greater than may be fairly accounted for, by that unequal distribution of talent and capacity which must always shew itself among a great number of individuals. Besides, it is a dangerous line of defence to take. It would give the enemy a vantage-ground, from which we should find it difficult to dislodge him. For it would be a libel on classical studies, considered as a means of training youth, to admit, that so long a period as six years does not suffice to impart a knowledge of the classics to a larger proportion of the youth than is proved by experience to have acquired it. We must look for the cause of the admitted fact, neither in the nature of the studies themselves, which, when rightly pursued, are quite attainable by minds of moderate ability, nor in the character of the teachers, who are all men of high and acknowledged qualifications, but in circumstances which would lead to a like result, under any set of teachers, and whatever were the leading object of the instruction.

The main cause, I apprehend, will be found, as I stated before, in the long established practice of carrying forward the pupils of all the classes, from the lowest stage of the school to the highest, without applying



any test of proficiency beyond the skirmishing for places in the class itself. There are no stated periods for comparative trial between the members of the different classes,—no proof of attainment required before passing to a higher status in the school. Each master, at the commencement of his quadriennial course, enrolls in his class, we shall suppose, a hundred pupils. These he regards as his *peculium*, his little flock, which it is his business to keep his hand about, and do his best to see that no one stray from the fold, till, at the close of his fourth session, he make over the whole to the charge of the Rector. Thus it appears that it is the time of attendance, not the amount of proficiency, which gives a passport to the highest class. It is an unavoidable consequence of this arrangement, that the difference between the clever boys and the dull, the diligent and the idle, which is perceptible enough at the close of the first year, continues to increase up to the end of the fourth. Like ill-matched racers, they start abreast, but soon present a straggling line, which lengthens and shews wider intervals at every step they advance in the course. Now, this is one of the cases in which we might take a lesson from our southern neighbours. At Eton, at Rugby, and at most, I believe, of the public schools of England, half-yearly examinations are held to determine who are fit to take the next regular step in advance. Moderate progress is sufficient to secure this step, and a boy is then said to have ‘got his remove.’ An extraordinary degree of diligence and ability is rewarded by two steps in advance instead of one, and he is then said to have ‘gained a double remove.’ On the other hand, a boy greatly below the average at-

tainment is liable to 'lose his remove,' and remain where he was for another semestre. This forfeiture, and the double promotion, are things of but rare occurrence; the great body of the pupils pass on; but such events are known to happen occasionally, and the consequence is, that hope on the part of some, and apprehension on the part of others, produce a most salutary effect on the discipline of the school and the exertions of the boys.

It may be asked how it was, that, with a full conviction, from reason and observation, of the importance of such an arrangement, I did not make this one of my innovations upon the established discipline of the High School. My answer is, that I saw difficulties in the way which I was not prepared to encounter. They arose in part from my colleagues. It was easy to foresee, and I was not left in doubt on the subject, that they would take the alarm at the prospect of any change which seemed to threaten an immediate diminution of their emoluments, which were already much too small. The history of the High School, within my own recollection, furnished more than one example of jealousies, and even open quarrels among the teachers, injurious alike to the efficiency of their instructions, to their personal comfort, and to the character of the seminary. Such petty squabbles I was desirous to avoid; and very unwilling to break up, or even endanger, the good understanding which had subsisted all along between my colleagues and myself.

Difficulties still greater were to be apprehended on the part of the patrons, whose consent was indispensable. The contemplated change could only have been effected in one of two ways,—either by adding to the staff of teachers, or by guaranteeing the exist-

ing masters against suffering any diminution of income by the new arrangement. But these were things which it was vain to look for from the Town Council, in the labouring state of the city finances which continued during the whole time of my rectorship.\*

Even with these obstacles, however, formidable as they were, I should have thought it my duty to grapple, had things continued long as bad as I found them. But the introduction of the monitorial method abated the evil to such an extent, that the balance of good seemed to me to preponderate in favour of leaving things as they were, and waiting for more favourable circumstances. And, indeed, so far as regarded boys of superior ability and proficiency, I could not but think that I had discovered a remedy for the evil, when I devolved on them the duties of the monitorial office, and opened up the boundless career of 'private studies.' Even with the more sluggish and backward, there was a decided and manifest improvement. Still, however, in the lower parts of the class, there always remained a considerable number, doomed, by the state of preparation in which they joined the class, to take little or no interest in much of the business. These boys it would have been a harsh proceeding to reject, even had I been armed with the power to do so, and thereby to inflict a stigma on them in their progress towards a profession, in which they might afterwards acquit themselves, as many I know have done, very respectably. The most I could do for pupils of this description was to simplify the business as much as possible, to bring them

\* These pecuniary embarrassments led at last to the bankruptcy of the 'Guid Toun.'

over the elementary principles once more by prescribing a private course of Mair's Introduction, and to read with them an easier book, such as Quintus Curtius, instead of Livy or Cicero. For this subdivision of business, and adaptation of lessons to different capacities, the monitorial method afforded facilities altogether unattainable without it, in a large class under one teacher. Still, much time was lost to the lower boys, in listening to what they could not comprehend, and I was obliged to draw what consolation I could from the reflection, that if they were making little progress in classical learning, they might be profiting by the occasional discussions they heard on topics of a more general and to them interesting kind, and might be stimulated to exertion by being brought to a sense of their own deficiencies; and that, even at the worst, they might be improved in moral feeling and deportment, by being subjected to the regular discipline of the class, and by associating with well-conducted and studious comrades:—

*Est quadam prodire tenus, si non datur ultra.*

I am aware, too, that something has been done in the subsidiary classes, where the evil begins, to lessen it, and to carry the grammatical instruction to the very lowest boys. Credit and popularity, not unmerited, have accrued to masters when their pupils of the lower forms, down even to the foot of the class, made a respectable appearance on the day of the annual examination; while it has happened that the master, who brought his distinguished pupils prominently forward, and did not venture to weary the audience with the lame performances of his lowest

boys, was less of a general favourite. But success in drilling the lower boys to make a decent figure before the public, is not always gained without a sacrifice. It is paying much too dear for it, if it be purchased at the cost of keeping back the finer spirits of the class and leaving them unemployed. It must, at the same time, be admitted, that the danger is greater in the opposite direction; and the greater, perhaps, the more ingenious and accomplished the teacher. For to such a teacher the temptation is strong to give an undue proportion of his time and attention to the training of the clever boys,—it being a much more agreeable task to pour instruction into apt and willing minds, than either to deal patiently and tenderly with the feeble capacities of some boys, or to contend with the sullenness and dogged indifference of others.

But in spite of all that has been done in the Rector's and the other classes to abate the evil, the root of it still remains, and ever must remain, till a plan similar to that which I have mentioned as existing in the English schools be adopted. If the pecuniary embarrassments of the Municipal Body should ever be removed, and the Patrons have both the means and the wisdom to do something for the improvement of a seminary, the sound and healthy state of which must always be an important element in the prosperity of the city over which they preside, they could not more effectually promote that object than by taking measures for the redress of a grievance, which parents and the public are so well entitled to complain of. The first step in these beneficial measures would be to meet the objections of the existing masters, (for with their successors they could make their own

terms,) by tendering to them a distinct guarantee, that the change contemplated should not be allowed to reduce their incomes. If such security were given, and the prospect held out of a small addition to the miserable pittance which the teachers receive under the name of salary, it is difficult to conceive that there should be any reluctance, on their part, to adopt an arrangement which would contribute so much to their success in teaching, and so greatly elevate the character of the school. Nor would the experiment, the Patrons might be assured, be to them a costly one.

To carry out the improvement, it would be requisite that half-yearly examinations should take place in the four classes subsidiary to the Rector's, with the view of ascertaining the progress which every boy had made in the preceding six months. It would then be decided,—whether it was such as to justify his going forward in the regular progression of time;—how many, by shewing extraordinary diligence and ability, merited a double promotion;—and whether any, in consequence of a very manifest want of those qualities, should be condemned to pass six months more in the same stage of their studies.

It would not be necessary, in order to secure the full benefit of such an ordeal, that the examples of promotion and detention should be numerous: the great body of the class would move on; but the occasional occurrence of the honour and the disgrace, and the uncertainty hanging over the results, would act powerfully; where stimulus is most wanted, upon the torpid and thoughtless, and would develop much talent, which at present lies comparatively dormant. The semestral examinations should be con-

ducted by the Rector himself, and his labour in this responsible task might be easily lightened, by making the trials consist of exercises written in school, under his eye, and corrected in the first instance by the advanced boys of his own class. And as it would be only among the extremes of excellence and deficiency that a selection would be made, such preliminary sifting would narrow the field of competition, and mitigate the demand on the Rector's time. To give to the occasion greater solemnity and impressiveness, it might be well to announce the results of the examinations to the assembled classes in the presence of one of the patrons.

With the view of facilitating this arrangement, as well as for other weighty reasons, would it not be desirable to make the summer vacation commence earlier in the High School, as it does in so many other seminaries throughout the island? The pupils of the school would be gainers, both in health and proficiency, by shifting the day of public examination to the first week in July. It is about that time that the courts of law break up for the autumn, and many of the parents connected with the legal profession are desirous to leave town. The days are then longer and fitter for youthful sports and rural excursions. The masters, too, would be gainers. They, even more than the boys, have need of relaxation, and for the purposes of recreation and travelling, July would be a good exchange for September. Both masters and pupils would escape the enervating effects of hard work in the month of July, coming as it does at the close of a long term of exertion; and both would begin with renewed vigour in September, in a temperate

atmosphere, and with a good length of evenings at home, which is by much the most favourable time for study. The year, too, would be thus pretty equally divided by Christmas, and the week of holidays at that time would afford a good opportunity for settling the business of 'removes.'

How the arrangement recommended could be made without increasing the number of masters, would be matter of grave deliberation. Supposing the Christmas trials to be directed to the forming of each class into an upper and lower division, as is the case in many forms of the English Schools, it might then be desirable to have an usher to assist in carrying on occasionally different kinds of business. Desirable, I have said,—not indispensable; for it is quite practicable to reserve two or three hours a-week for distinct lessons to the two divisions, and to have one heard by monitors while the other should be saying to the master.

And even if the municipal body should never be both able and willing to advance money, or to give the proposed guarantee, the masters might nevertheless go into the new arrangement with perfect confidence, that the mutual exchanges of pupils which might follow the semestral examination would be confined to a very small number, and that the balance of pecuniary gain or loss would be so near an average equality, that no master would be a loser in the long run. Nay, he might be well assured, that any temporary loss of emolument would be more than compensated in another way, by the improved character of the school; and the consequent increase of its numbers.

THERE are certain other changes in the state and



condition of the seminary as I found it and as I left it, which, though inferior in importance to that of which I have just spoken, would contribute much to improve the discipline. These, however, though I often felt the want of them, I never thought of with any hope of obtaining, because they were incompatible with the plan, the extent, and the fitting-up of the building as it now stands, (1823.) Nor should I have alluded to them at all, were there not reasonable grounds for expecting that a new High School will ere long be erected in some more eligible situation than the present.

A Common Hall, one may rest assured, will form a prominent part in any architectural design that may be submitted to the patrons, and it is equally sure, in some shape or other, to be sanctioned by them. It happened to me to know experimentally, what it was both to have such an accommodation and to be without it, and I may therefore be thought qualified to speak, not only of the uses that were made of it while it remained, but of those prospectively to which it may be turned, and of the principles on which it should be constructed in the new building.

When I began to teach the Rector's class in 1810, the building was of two stories, of which the upper was partitioned into five class-rooms, the Rector's occupying the centre, flanked on each side by two Masters' teaching-rooms, and all the five rooms having doors of communication opening into each other. On the ground-floor, a space equal to nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of the length, and the whole breadth, of the building, was allotted to the Hall, the remaining  $\frac{1}{4}$ th part being divided between a school library at one end, and

a writing-room at the other. The use, and the only use, to which this large hall had ever been applied, was to the assembling of all the classes every morning for prayers. On these occasions, each of the five Masters officiated as chaplain by turns, for a week at a time, while the other four stood at the head of their respective classes.

This is a custom which it is highly desirable should be kept up, both as an impressive act of social worship, and as a check on the irregular attendance of the teachers. Thirty or forty years ago, when, owing to some misunderstanding among the Teachers, the morning meetings in the Hall were discontinued, (and this was the case when I was a pupil in one of the under classes,) the want of punctuality shewed itself to an extent that became a reproach to the school. But an indolent or unprincipled master, who could slip unobserved into his separate class-room half an hour behind his time, or send an incompetent substitute to keep the boys together when he had a mind to be absent himself, would hardly have ventured on such practices, had he been aware that they must be known to his colleagues every time they occurred.

Another use of the common hall, which I had occasion to mention in a former chapter, was for the accommodation of my monitorial decads. The whole space being unencumbered, with no furnishing but a pulpit, and moveable benches, the recesses of the windows were convenient places for the divisions to form in; and the pulpit was a station, from which the eye commanded the whole of the busy groups. The hall was very convenient also for communicating information, giving directions, and addressing admonitions,

which concerned the whole school. This was generally done from the pulpit, after prayers, before the boys separated to their several class-rooms. There were occasions, too,—when faults had been committed, or mischievous practices seemed to be gaining ground,—on which I thought it right, for the sake of giving solemnity and impressiveness to the warning, to convoke the boys of all the classes into the Hall, that they might hear the case stated, the rule of conduct explained, and the penalties for infringing it announced, by the head-master.

But as the numbers continued to increase in all the classes as well as mine, it became necessary not only to build an addition to the Rector's class-room, but to transfer two of the other classes, in which the pressure was the greatest, to the ground-floor, and partition the Hall into two apartments to accommodate them. Accordingly, since the year 1816, when this change took place, there has been no assembling of the whole school in one room. As far as concerned myself, I was no loser by the alteration; for I succeeded to the two vacated class-rooms which were on the same floor with my own, and I had thus a greater facility than ever in arranging and manoeuvring my divisions. But the interests of the school suffered by this partition in more ways than one. It is greatly to be wished, therefore, that, in the plan of the new building, the uses of the Hall which I have already enumerated, should not be lost sight of—I mean, the convocation of all the classes on solemn occasions for admonition and discipline, the monitorial subdivisions, and the morning muster of boys and of teachers. There are, besides, two prospective uses to which

the common Hall may be made subservient, which deserve mention.

One of these is, to make it serve for an annual exhibition and distribution of prizes at the close of the school session, in the presence of the parents, the public, and the magistrates of the city. No argument is required to recommend this being kept in view in the new plan; the danger rather is, that every other use of the Hall will be sacrificed to a display so gratifying to all the parties concerned. But if it could be obtained only by such a sacrifice, I should think it too dearly purchased. For, as concerns the pupils, whose interests ought to be paramount to every other consideration, I am not disposed to rate high the benefits accruing from the pomp and circumstance of such a display, nor even from the distribution of prizes. In a thoroughly well conducted classical school—‘that faultless monster which the world ne’er saw’—there would be motive and stimulus enough, without either dread of punishment, or prospect of material reward. But till the philosophy of teaching be fully understood and brought home to the business and bosoms of schoolmasters, this point may be conceded to the vanity of parents and the curiosity of amateurs, provided it can be done without interfering with other and more important uses of the Hall.

There is another appropriation of the projected hall to which, if it were practicable, I should attach more importance than to the annual show, but which, I fear, is less likely to find support from the Patrons, or favour with the public. So many petty difficulties, indeed, stand in the way, that I shall content myself with propounding it as a matter worth considering,

whether the Common Hall might not be so constructed as to admit the whole boys to breakfast together every morning before school-time. Such an arrangement would secure to our youth much of the advantage which I formerly described as resulting to English boys from their familiar intercourse with one another. A meeting like this, indeed, would have little effect in bringing *men* closely together and making them better acquainted; but with *boys*, who stand less upon reserve and ceremony and formal introductions, half an hour spent daily in this intercourse of good fellowship, and in the sociality of a meal, would act powerfully in developing character, in cultivating the social affections, and in improving the manners and address. Some regulation and superintendence might be required at first, to set the thing a-going in the proper spirit, but the presence of a popular master as the *custos morum* would suffice to give the tone; and even his attendance might soon be dispensed with. If this experiment were ever tried, there ought to be no distinction observed, either of places or of classes; the grouping of the little parties might be left to the free action of natural affinities and elective attractions.

Having said so much of the Common Hall and its uses, a few remarks may not be out of place on the subject of Class-rooms in the contemplated edifice. For a class-room, I consider the quadrangle as a better form than the square. When a considerable number of boys are to sit for two hours consecutively—and that twice in the course of their daily attendance—listening to the instructions of a master, or the ‘saying’ of a schoolfellow, it is by no means a matter

of indifference what sort of benches they shall sit on, and how those benches shall be disposed ; the object being that all shall hear distinctly whatever is said either by master or pupil. When I attended the school as a pupil, the seats, or *forms* as they were called, were simple deal planks, without support for either book or back : and when I came back as Rector, I recognised my old acquaintances. The discomfort a young person feels from sitting long in one position, is not a little aggravated by having a book to carry in his hand, and nothing to lean his back against. To continue sitting erect in such circumstances requires a considerable muscular effort, tiring of which very soon, he sinks into a state of collapse, leans his elbow or his book on his doubled knee, rounds his shoulders, narrows his chest, and arches his spine ; and is thus in a fair way to contract a habit of slouching and stooping which may last him for life.

To counteract habits no less detrimental to the health than to the carriage of a boy, I proposed to the College Committee, who take charge of such matters in the first instance, a plan which, at a trifling expense, would go far to remove the evil. It was, that a ledge or bar of wood, rounded off at the upper side, should be erected upon iron rods attached to the benches, and at such a height above the seat as to receive and support the back. It was agreed that the experiment should be tried upon one or two of the benches ; and the Committee having reported favourably, the fitting-up was extended to all the seats of my class-room,\* and proved a great relief to a serious inconvenience.

\* Forms of the construction described in the text have been since.

Again, as to the best arrangement of the benches for the facility of hearing, it is obvious that if they be all disposed in parallel rows in front of the master's desk, as is very generally done, what *he* says is well heard, but the boys in the front rows, while they face the master, turn their backs upon the great body of the class, who, if the voice of the speaker be a weak one, hear not a word, and consequently give themselves up to idleness. The result of my experience in this matter is, that the most convenient collocation is in the form of the Greek letter II, the master's desk being at the open end, and the rows of benches ranging parallel to the two sides. Thus the boys on the opposite sides front each other, and the cross benches face the desk; while the open space in the middle is reserved for the master's principal *statio*, or rather *ambulatio*, (for a public teacher should seldom be *sedentary*, *inter docendum*.) By this arrangement every boy who is called to say, presents his face to two of the sides, and the seats on his own side can never be so many deep as to prevent his being heard by those behind him.† The perfection of the arrangement perhaps would be, that the benches should be fixed in the position described, and rise gently from the level of the floor, one behind another, like the *sedilia* in the Roman amphitheatres.\*

adopted, not only in the other classes, but in the Edinburgh Academy, and many other schools and places of public assembly.

\* I am aware that, when boys are thus placed face to face, there is a temptation to idlers to correspond across by signs and gestures: but of two evils I would chuse the least, and at the same time the most easily remedied.

† See Note on page 147.





**NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS,**

**PARTLY**

**TRANSFERRED FROM MANUSCRIPT OF 1823,**

**PARTLY**

**ADDED IN 1851.**



## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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### NOTE ON PAGE 12.

THE paragraph numbered 1 on page 12, is one of the instances in which the fear of being tediously minute led me to condense the original record ; but it may be worth while to append the text as it stands in the MS. I am persuaded there are many teachers, not unaware of the value of this exercise, who are led to take it seldom, or to abandon it altogether, rather than submit to the waste of time incurred by the ordinary process, and the difficulty, after all, of testing the preparation.

‘ Among the advantages gained by the adoption of monitorial subdivisions, may be reckoned one not unimportant in the economy of time. Learning by heart forms, or ought to form, a part of every schoolboy’s business. I found the practice established in the Rector’s class, and availed myself of it to store the minds of my pupils with choice passages of the classics, taking especial care they should never commit to memory what they did not well understand. But I was discouraged from repeating this exercise frequently, by the obvious objection that, in a class so numerous, it was impossible to hear every one say even a small portion, without an immense sacrifice of time : for there is, in fact, no gain to any party while the same thing is said over and over ;

and if the first ten who said well were sent away, it was a sort of injustice to many tens far down in the class, who, however well prepared, were obliged to sit without occupation till it came to their turn to say. All this while, there was little or no occupation of mind for either master or scholar; the old misery of sitting idle was severely felt, and the business of saying and hearing was, after all, imperfectly done, and all checks on want of preparation were inoperative. But, for these evils the subdivision of the class provided an effectual cure. On the Saturdays, which were generally allotted to this exercise, the monitors said first to me, and upon acquitting themselves well, were sent into divisions, where, having but nine boys in charge, a few lines from each, with closed books, enabled them, in less than a quarter of an hour, to lodge with me accurate returns on the saying of every boy in the class. Even *my* hearing of the monitors was easily dispensed with. They might be sent at once into divisions, and enjoined to say by heart the whole or half of the task to their division before they began to hear; and in that case the return was accompanied with the head boy's attestation of the monitor's saying.'

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NOTE A. ON PAGE 44.

My attention was lately called to the following article, which appeared in the Perthshire Advertiser of 28th February 1839. The narrative is from the pen of a gentleman who was a member of the class at the time; and I am tempted to insert it here, both as an example of the truth of the principle stated in the text, and a proof of the kindness of Dr. Adam's nature.

"At a time when education is likely to occupy more attention than ever, the opinion of an eminent and successful teacher, now alive, may be illustrated by an original anecdote of another instructor of youth, long since dead. Not that we would have it inferred that the latter uniformly abstained

from the use of the lash, but the skill and dexterity with which, in spite of a vicious system, he contrived to gain the affections of his scholars, could be attested by many now holding high and important situations.

"Professor Pillans, interrogated as to *Corporal Punishment*, gave evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons on Education in 1834, to the following effect:—'In the first operation of any national system of education, I would certainly not go the length of prohibiting by law the infliction of corporal punishment; but there ought, at least, to be very strong recommendations to schoolmasters and teachers, to use it as rarely as possible, and only for offences against morality. Nothing, in my opinion, justifies even the limited use of it, but the present imperfect state of education.'

"The following anecdote will illustrate this, of which the writer was an eye-witness.

"A boy, in *nickering* (a schoolboy term) an object to another, inadvertently soiled the sleeve of the well-kept coat of the teacher, whose back was turned at the time. On perceiving the circumstance, he turned calmly round, and, addressing his numerous class of about 130 scholars, stated, 'that he was about to do what he had never done before in his class-room;' at the same time taking off his coat and carefully wiping it. Having again put it on, he proceeded from the top of the class, enquiring at each boy individually, if he was the guilty person. On coming to the offender, he at once admitted the fact. To the astonishment of all, Dr. Adam gently patted the boy on the head, and said, "Stand forward,—this is a good boy,—*he has told the truth.*"

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#### NOTE ON PAGE 57.

##### MANNER OF PREPARING PRIVATE STUDIES.

The following particulars with regard to the preparation of Private Studies were omitted in the text, but may not be

uninteresting to some readers, and are therefore inserted here.

'The Private Student was enjoined to read, with pencil in hand, and grammar and dictionary by his side, and not to rest satisfied till he had made a clear and intelligible meaning out of every clause and sentence of the original Latin; and when any word, clause, or sentence occurred, from which such meaning could not be extracted by his utmost efforts, he was then to underline, or enclose it within brackets, and mark D on the margin. It was strongly recommended that he should make it a point of duty to read a portion *every* day, acting on the maxim of the great Painter, "Nulla dies sine linea," availing himself even of the smallest fragments—the *odds and ends* as we say—of time, rather than not make the rule absolute of doing something, however little, *every* day. The day previous to that appointed *for shewing up*, (as it used to be called,) which took place once a fortnight, was to be reserved for *revising* the accumulated readings of the preceding days. With the advantage in this process of knowing a little more of the story, it was not unlikely that several of the pencilled Difficulties would disappear; but to all those passages which were still obscure, he was to put down, in a paper book or register kept expressly for the purpose, a reference to the number of the chapter and the first word of the sentence in which the difficulty occurred. Whether the difficulty consisted of a single word, a clause, or a whole sentence, it was to be written out at length in the register, and the opposite page left blank, for the purpose of inserting the solution when it should be obtained. When all this was neatly filled into his register, he was to state at the close, the entire quantity he had read for this 'shewing,' and the number of difficulties of which he required the solution. His signature to this written record of his private studies was understood to imply, 1st, An express declaration that this was all *bona fide* his own doing, without any assistance but what he could derive from such books as grammar and dictionary, and any accessible edition of the author with Latin notes; 2dly, That he had a meaning for

every passage which he did not present for solution, and had not recorded in his register; and, 3dly, That as soon as his difficulties were explained to his satisfaction, he challenged examination on all that he professed.'

I may add here also, as likely to interest some readers, the text which I have abridged at the bottom of p. 68.

'The first business in the Divisions of Private Students was to solve the difficulties proposed by each out of his register: and that the monitor might not be tempted to put them off with a wrong or imperfect explanation, two monitors were appointed to each division, and these were always next each other in the class. The higher of the two was bound to solve the difficulties proposed, the lower all the while watching to find him wrong; and when the latter succeeded in explaining what the higher could not, he took his place, and became solver in his turn. The time of these divisions was spent, the first half in clearing away difficulties, and the other half in hearing eight or ten lines construed by each boy in succession. Of all that passed,—the number of difficulties solved, and the rounds of construing,—an account was kept by the lower monitor, on a slip of paper, ruled in columns. Sometimes I employed a printed form, which he had merely to fill up; and the report, when finally adjusted, was signed by both monitors. The report, however, was not given in till Friday, as a portion of time was reserved every preceding day of that week for construing and examination; so that the report contained ample evidence, confirmed as it might be by oral inquiry, on which to form an opinion of the merits of each boy. On the Friday, therefore, when the whole class was in the ordinary divisions, I went round, with the reports of the private students in my hand, and passed judgment as to which of them had done well enough to deserve a holiday on the morrow.'

## NOTE ON PAGE 63.

## FIRST STEPS IN LATIN VERSIFICATION.

The initiatory process, borrowed from Eton, and which I have seen no reason to alter since, may be thus described :—Extracts from the *Fasti* and *Tristia* of Ovid, which are both composed in the Elegiac measure, (that is, Hexameter and Pentameter lines alternately,) having been used as a class-book for some time previous, and the boys accustomed to the scanning of that measure and the rules of prosody, I made them comprehend, that such knowledge was not enough for the understanding of what constituted Latin verse; that an Hexameter or a Pentameter might be perfect in the number of feet and correctness of syllabic quantities, and yet have no claim to be considered as legitimate verse: that several other conditions were indispensable :—the cæsural pause; the locking or dovetailing of the feet into different words; the necessity of concluding the Hexameter with a word of not more than three nor less than two syllables, and the Pentameter with a dissyllable only :—and that to the cadence and melody of the line the observance of these conditions was quite as essential as correctness in number and quantity of syllables. This was explained by contrasting such lines as

Romæ | mœnia | terruit | impiger | Hannibal | armis—  
with—

Silves|trem tenui| mu|sam medi|taris a|vena.

To accustom their ear, then, to perceive the difference, and teach them the varieties in the structure of verse on which depends the charm of Ovid's and Virgil's lines, the pupils were instructed to form, out of a page of the *Fasti*, elegiac couplets that should fulfil all the conditions enumerated, and be as agreeable to the ear as the verses of those two poets. And this was to be done by forming the well-sounding though meaningless Hexameter out of the Pentameters only, by selecting a



word from one and then a word from another, but never two words in sequence. A Pentameter, in like manner, was to be constructed out of the Hexameters of the page, under the same restriction as to consecutive words. I find a record of the first experiment that ever was made in the High School of this novel kind of exercise, in a letter to a friend at Eton, to whom I was mainly indebted for my own knowledge of the method. From that letter, of which I happen to have preserved a copy, I subjoin an-extract. It is dated February 22. 1811. . . . . "On Friday last I set the boys to work, in my presence, at the composition of 'nonsense' verses, giving them a page to choose upon, from the Excerpta which I have printed and have been using for some time. The day before, I had explained the nature and object of this exercise, and dictated to them three couplets of my own making, marking the number of the line in Ovid from which each word was selected. These they were told to carry home with them and compare with their book, and to come prepared next day to try an exercise of a similar kind from a page which I should pitch on. Accordingly, after construing the Sallust lesson, they were ordered to proceed, slate and pencil in hand, with this admonition, that, as it was an exercise which admitted of no co-operation, I should expect no whispering or noise. I remained in my desk, ready to receive the two couplets (for I prescribed no more,) as they were finished. For forty minutes the silence was as profound as I ever witnessed in so large an assembly: the construing of the boys in the adjoining class-rooms, the occasional squeak of a boy's slate-pencil which did not run smoothly, and, during the last quarter of an hour, the coming up to the desk of one or two boys who had finished, were the only sounds which broke in upon this silence. As they finished, they were despatched to a writing room, to write out a fair copy on paper and bring it to me; and the rest who did not succeed within the time prescribed, I *allowed* (for I mean to make it a privilege, and said so,) to bring the verses next day. Those that were given in I carried home, with much greater

eagerness to sit down to read them, than I used to feel at the cutting up of a new Edinburgh Review. And what, think you, was the result? Why, that of about 30, who alone, of 140, had finished in three quarters of an hour, *one only was fruitless*,—the rest full of the most absurd blunders, both in quantity and in structure. And what does this prove?—That boys may *scan* for ever, (most of these boys have been doing so with Hexameters for two or three years,) and yet remain totally inobservant of quantity, and of the structure and melody of Latin verse. One general defect was in neglecting the Cæsura; and on this I lectured them at great length the day after, as well as on the other prevailing blunders, and told them I should make another short experiment on Monday. The first copies which I got are curious documents: boys who, in reading either prose or verse, very seldom commit a false quantity, thought nothing of beginning an Hexameter with such forms as 'Redditus quantum.' "

A little instruction and admonition renders this a very easy exercise; and it is one by no means without its use, not only as it prepares the way for the higher departments of versification, but even where it is carried no farther, it gives a perfect and practical knowledge of the structure of Latin verse, and a feeling of its melody and rhythm, which the most intimate familiarity with the rules of prosody and the longest habit of scanning lines would never have imparted. It induces also greater attention to quantities, and a greater dread, and consequently a smaller chance, of committing false ones.

When practice has given such facility in making these mechanical verses, that ten or twelve can be turned off without a fault in half an hour, the pupil is prepared for the next step in the process, which is the making of verses out of sense dictated by the teacher. The English is taken down from dictation, in lines corresponding to the Latin verses required, so that all that is wanted is the choice and collocation of words; and in the former the beginner may be assisted, more or less, by giving him the words he is least likely to hit upon.

The next step in advance was to dictate 4, 6, or 8 lines of

'sense,' on an easy subject, as a home exercise, and invite those who could to add two, or any larger number of lines of their own, in continuation. So much distinction and privilege were attached to success in this difficult achievement, that most of the ambitious spirits that were at all fit for it, embarked in the attempt.

The power of making the meaningless, mechanical lines, commonly called 'nonsense verses,' is quite within reach of every boy who has been taught elementary prosody. And even this was a considerable step beyond the mere faculty of scanning and giving rules. It compelled the pupil to attend to the melody produced by running the feet into different words: it enabled him to understand the nature and use of the Cæsura, and the other laws of structure mentioned above; and thus prepared him for receiving greater pleasure from the perusal of the Latin poets.

The next step—that of making Latin verses out of sense given—is a thing of no very difficult attainment, even by the lower boys: but it required a considerable expenditure of time; and so great a number always joined my class ill-grounded in the elements of prosody, that I was never able to carry this part of the instruction much lower than the middle.

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#### NOTE ON PAGE 65.

Of the copy of verses alluded to, (which was written on the prescribed theme, "*Sideribus novere vias.*"—Lucan. ix. 495.), I insert that portion which describes a traveller left alone in the sandy deserts of Africa, and the phenomena of the Mirage and the Simoom.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dum peragrat lassus sine tramite regna viator,  
Immotum frustra simul auribus aëra captans  
Atque oculis ponti flaventis littora quærens,  
Nil cernit præter cælum undique, et undique arenas

Quas tacitis æterna Quies superincubat alis ;  
 Longinquum tonitru resonat nisi forte leonis,  
 Aut trifido serpens horrendum sibilat ore,  
 Aut—quæ mercator, sabuli discrimina tentans,  
 Cælo noscit iter saxove Aquilonis amico,—  
 Rauca camelorum vox dira silentia rumpit.  
 Advena percussus vix se jam vivere sentit,  
 Mortua cum circa prorsus Natura videtur.

Hic tamen interdum procul æquor amabile cernit,  
 Æthere cæruleo longe sua cæcula miscens,  
 Riparumque toros virides : non qualis *Oasis*,  
 Rarè permulcens oculos spe fontis et umbrâ  
 Vix flavum varians campum, sed ubique patentes  
 Elysios campos. En præmia digna laboris !  
 Lætitiâ præceps exul ruit, advolat, instat,—  
 Jamque tenet, gelidas jam sese immergit in undas,  
 Quum subito ex oculis vanescunt omnia lapsu,  
 Statque miser campi medio sine limite adusti.

Quòd si consurgens quando Neptunus arenæ  
 Jungit equos Venti, et rapidas molitur habenas,  
 Effugit ecce Quies ; præceps Discordia sævit :  
 Ante rotas Regis gaudens exultat Eremus,  
 In chaos antiquum tanquam se funderet orbis.

Ille, columnato provectus turbine curru,  
 Horrisono gestit stridore, regitque procellam,  
 Dum fluctus infra torquentur gurgite vasto,  
 Desuper et cælum fulvis obtexitur umbris.  
 Tunc miser, occurrit sævi qui Numinis iræ !  
 Nec fuga, nec votum, nec vis profecerit illi.

Forsan et infelix, membris languore solutis,  
 Sese errare putat quæ fons argenteus undâ  
 Lætificat patrios campos, aut scandere colles,  
 Quorum gaudebat juvenis super ardua niti.  
 Heu ! minimè reputas tibi quàm sors ingruat atra :  
 Somnus enim, mentem qui illudit imagine pulchrâ,  
 Est Consanguinei prænuntius ; altior instat  
 Umbra, soporque caput languens jam ferreus urget.

Quin properas? venti veloces indue pennas,  
 Si tempestatem possis vitare sequacem.  
 Nequicquam!—assequitur non eluctabile fatum,  
 Atque indefletus jam mergitur exul arenâ.  
 Excitus, ad sævum vertit semel æthera vultum,  
 Et patriæ dulcis moriens reminiscitur agros.

1820.

JOANNES BROWN PATTERSON.

The foregoing lines were translated as follows by J. F. Stoddart, grandson of the late Sir Harry Moncreiff, at that time fifteen years of age, and a member of the same class with the writer. Mr Stoddart had already distinguished himself as a Judge in Ceylon, when he died at Colombo, in 1839, in his 35th year.

The traveller, where'er he turns his eyes,  
 Sees nought but barren sands and torrid skies;  
 O'er which her wing dread Silence ever spreads,  
 Save where the waste the roaring lion treads,  
 Or hissing serpents to the sun unfold  
 Their scales that glisten with refulgent gold.

Haply afar blue waters seem to rise,  
 And blend their colouring with the azure skies,  
 While verdant fields on every side are seen:  
 —Not as the desert's gem, Oasis green,  
 (Like some blest island in the sandy main,)  
 Scarce rears her head above the scorching plain,—  
 But far and wide Elysian meads extend.  
 See, traveller, see! here all thy toils must end.  
 Onward he flies to reach the blissful glades;  
 Swift from his sight the flattering vision fades.

But if the Neptune of this sea of sand  
 Yoke to his winged car with furious hand  
 The horses of the Wind,—before him haste,  
 Exulting, the dark spirits of the waste;  
 Peace flies, and maddening Discord sweeps the plain,  
 As if old Chaos would resume his reign:

While He—the god ! throned on his pillar'd car,  
Delights to guide the elemental war ;  
And widely round the heaving billows rise,  
Till clouds of fiery sand exclude the skies.  
Then wretched he, the angry god who dares ;  
Him will avail nor force, nor flight, nor prayers.  
And haply, too,—when sunk in sweet repose  
He tastes a short-lived respite from his woes—  
His native mountains he in fancy sees,  
And feels his native mountain's freshening breeze.  
Alas, poor sleeper ! little dost thou deem  
How fate prepares to terminate thy dream ;  
This sleep, that cheats thee with illusions blest,  
Is the sure herald of a deeper rest.  
Haste, trav'ler ! Sleep's twin brother, Death, is nigh,  
Oh haste thee ! take the lightning's wing and fly.  
In vain I warn,—sunk 'neath the sandy wave,  
Nor force can rescue him, nor speed can save :  
Starting from dreams of bliss he sees his doom,  
Thinks of his home, and, sighing, finds a tomb.

1820.

JOHN FREDERICK STODDART.

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NOTE ON PAGE 72.

## CORRECTION OF WRITTEN EXERCISES.

The general principle on which I acted as to the marking and amending of written exercises was, that those of the monitors should be examined, corrected, and returned, by myself, and those of the divisions by monitors already well informed on the subject. To the monitors, therefore, the exercises were delivered on the appointed day, carried home by them, the errors marked, their number stated at the end of the exercise, and the monitors' own signatures appended. The errors were

to be noted by transfixing the offending word with a perpendicular line, (*obelizing*.) Capital or major blunders to be distinguished from more venial or minor, by the addition of the figure 1, 2, 3, &c. over the former; and in the sum-total the number of major errors was given above the line, of minor below, two of the latter being equal to one of the former, so that the equation might stand thus:  $\frac{3}{2} = 7$ . In the case of a translation, not positively erroneous, but bald, and admitting of improvement, the clause was underlined. As soon as the divisions formed the next day, the monitors returned the exercises, and a pause of a few minutes was allowed for the writers to inspect them and demand explanation of what they were unable to understand in the monitor's markings. To prevent confusion, the monitor, after a short interval, asked regularly round, if any explanation were wanted: finally, he proceeded to make such changes of place as the respective merits of the versions required; after which the lessons were gone on with, as on other days. Meantime my province was, to go round the divisions and hear appeals against either the marking or the decision of the monitors. While I was going these rounds, every boy in the class was enjoined to have his exercise in hand, corrected *pro tempore* and open for inspection the moment I reached his division. This was a court of review, both for writer and corrector; and an opportunity was then also afforded me of distinguishing exercises of uncommon merit, and particularly of comparing the highest of one division with the lowest of the next above, and promoting the former, if there was a striking difference. And all this was done with a minuteness of distinction, and attention to individual merit, which would have been quite unattainable in the general class, because, in the division, the discussion of each exercise took place without stopping the general business, except in the particular circle which was most interested and therefore the most likely to profit.

I have mentioned that the Friday exercise, the turning of English into Latin prose, was done in school. At the end of the time, the versions of the general class were collected by

the monitors of the divisions, and those of the monitors given to me. Their superior knowledge, with the help of a few hints given them before leaving school, enabled the monitors to correct what they took with them, that evening; and next morning they either brought, or sent them to the class if they had not to come themselves, on Saturday morning, all neatly done up in parcels, and titled on the back, with the number of the division marked. That same evening of Friday, I was employed in correcting the exercises of the monitors, and taking notes of the prevailing errors and of any important grammatical information suggested by the passage. In this way, by Saturday at 11 A.M., the hour of dismissing, I was in possession of the corrected and arranged versions of the whole class; and it was easy, in the course of that day, to examine one or two of each division, so as both to ascertain the style of the monitors' corrections, and add to my list of prevailing errors. On Monday the versions were returned to the writers; and while every boy had his own in hand, I enumerated and commented upon the prevailing errors, as described in the text, page 73.

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#### NOTE ON PAGE 95.

##### ON THE ALPHABET.

I am tempted to add here to the brief notice in page 95, a fuller explanation of opinions and views which have been extended and somewhat modified since the Text was written. They are the results, not of reading, but of being placed, as I have been for the last forty years, in a position affording ample opportunities of observation and experiment upon young minds: and the fruits of these are put down here, without knowing, or much caring, whether any thing, or all, which I am about to say, has been said before, or not.

It requires but a moment's reflection to satisfy even those whose attention has not been called to the subject before, that



nothing can be more fortuitous and unphilosophical than the order in which the letters of all our alphabets succeed one another. Vowels and consonants are intermixed, and in a sequence for which it is impossible to assign a reason: the whole is a chaos of atoms, jumbled together without regard to any principle of selection or succession. The anomaly and disorder could not have been greater, if the separate characters had been thrown like dice from a box, and picked up at random to take their places.

Most true indeed it is, that never, in the history of human intellect, was a more marked step made in advance, than when spoken language was resolved into its ultimate and indivisible elements,—and when those elements, hitherto addressed only to the ear, were designated to the eye by external and visible symbols. But the same master spirit of analysis, which first proved that the infinite diversities of human speech were all compounded out of a few simple pulses of the voice, cannot be supposed to have presided over the disposing of the alphabet as we now have it, and as it has come down to us, with slight variations, from ancient times. Grammarians, indeed, when grammar became a science, set themselves to classify and arrange the letters of existing alphabets; but this was done too late to supersede the inveterate habit of using the series which chance appears to have at first directed.

An Alphabet constructed upon purely philosophical principles, ought to contain a full complement—neither more nor less—of visible signs or characters, to represent those elementary sounds of the human voice which go to the formation of articulate speech and are not susceptible of farther analysis or separation of parts. If this definition of a perfect alphabet be admitted as true, and if we measure by it our present European alphabets, we shall find them all, and, in an especial manner, our own, falling far short of the standard. They are all deficient in some respects, and redundant in others. For example, the list of English Vowels (to begin with that class of letters) errs egregiously in both ways. Out of the six, there are three only which express simple uncompounded

sounds,—a, e, and o ; of the other three, i and u are not vowels but diphthongs ;—equivalent, the former to the Greek diphthong α, as in the personal pronoun *I*, and sometimes to æ, as in *ice*, the latter resolvable into ð-oo pronounced rapidly : and y, in all its uses, is a supernumerary. Again, there is in the English alphabet no single appropriate character, as there ought to be, for the sound of the Italian *a*, as in *stava*, or in the English word, *far* ; and yet this is the simplest sound emitted by the human voice, and the type of all the other vowels. We have no sign, either for the vowel-sound which is heard in the bleat of the sheep and in the Scotch way of pronouncing the Greek letter η, or for the simple sound which we, on this side the Tweed, give to the Greek υ,—a sound unknown to the English, but occurring constantly in French, either short, as in *malheur*, or long, as in *gravure*. Finally, we are without an alphabetic character appropriated to the simple vowel-sound u, as it appears in the Italian *virtù*, or in the English *too*. And w, which is not unusually inserted in the list of English vowels, is as much a supernumerary as y : for there is no use of that character which would not be served by the single *u* if we had it, or by our present use of the double o : *wine* is *oo-ine*, uttered quickly.

Then, as to the class of Consonants, our alphabet exhibits not a few examples, both of superfluities and redundancies. Of superfluous characters we have instances in c, both in its soft sound, equivalent to s, and its hard, identical with k ; and q, which is always followed by u, differs in no respect from the sound k, with u or w after it.\* Again, x, being obviously not a simple sound, but a mere symbol either of ks, as in *axe*, or of gz, as in *example*, is no more entitled to a place in the alphabet than &, the convenient abbreviation of *and*. Equally inadmissible in a philosophical alphabet, are j and g soft. As sounds, they are identical in value ; and the sound is not a simple one, but resolvable into dzh.

\* At the time of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, when the name of its old Capital appeared in every Journal, it was indifferently spelled, Mosqua, or Moskwa.

On the other hand, of deficiencies in our consonantal alphabet, we have examples in our want of a single character to express four out of the six aspirates, (two belonging to each order of Mutes,) and yet all the four are simple uncompounded sounds. The two aspirates for which we *have* alphabetic characters are the labial, *f*, *v*; but to express the aspirates of the second and third order, whose organs are the tip of the tongue and the root of it, our alphabet has no separate letter, though they are as well entitled to it as the lip-sounds. Thus, the sounds of the *th* in *thin* and *thine*,—the one the aspirate of *t* and the other of *d*,—are both expressed by *th*. With regard to the aspirates of *k* and *g* hard, they are sounds unknown in the present use of the English tongue, though one of them (*kh* = the Greek  $\chi$  as pronounced in Scotland,) is familiar to the German and Scotch ear; the other, the aspirate of *g*, which has a character assigned to it in the Sanscrit alphabet, is nowhere found in the British Islands, except among the Celtic population. It is a lugubrious sound, common in Gaelic, and other rude dialects, and somewhat akin to that mode of pronouncing the letter *r* called the Northumberland burr, which consists in employing the root, instead of the tip, of the tongue in giving utterance to that letter.

But supposing even that all redundancies in our alphabet were lopt off, and all deficiencies supplied, so that there should be separate and single characters assigned to every uncompounded pulse of the human voice, it could not even then be called 'a philosophical alphabet,' until the letters composing it were arranged in a series that should be in strict accordance with the order of nature. What that natural order is,—in other words, what is the proper sequence of alphabetic characters,—it seems to me not difficult to determine.

I. In the first place, I should say that precedence is due to the VOWELS, for the reason assigned in the text, viz. that the sounds which they represent have the common characteristic of being sent forth from the open mouth (*la bouche béante*), and are distinguished from each other only by slight modifications in the posture of the tongue and lips. They

are emissions of sound, not applications of organs. It is not easy to give an exhaustive catalogue of such vowel-sounds as are entitled to have a separate character in a philosophical alphabet. All of them admit of many scarcely perceptible variations, not only when they are taken singly and pronounced apart either as long or short, but in syllables, according as they precede, or are enclosed between, certain consonants: so that it would not be difficult to multiply vowel-sounds to an almost indefinite extent, which would tend greatly to the confusion and embarrassment of the subject. In fixing the number of simple vowels at *seven*, my object was to steer a middle course between excessive multiplication and undue retrenchment. Even for the whole of the small number to which I have reduced these vowel-sounds, it is impossible to find appropriate characters in our modern alphabets, and recourse has accordingly been had to the Greek for three characters out of the seven—*ε*, *η*, *υ*, ascribing to these letters respectively the sound which is given to them in all the schools and colleges of Scotland, and in most, if not all, of the schools and colleges of Europe, except those of England. To express the remaining four, I retain the letters of our own alphabet, *a*, *i*, *o*, *u*, using them however to represent the European sound of those characters, not the English, which differs from the European in all of them except the letter *o*.

The VOWELS then would stand foremost, occupying the first seven places, in our proposed alphabet, in the following order: *a*, *ε*, *η*, *i*, *o*, *u*, *υ*.

Next in the alphabetic series would come the CONSONANTS, which are the ground-work of articulate speech as distinguished from the calls of the lower animals. The most obvious and the most philosophical arrangement of Consonants is into three Orders, or Brotherhoods, corresponding to the vocal organs which are employed in giving them utterance. The organs of voice we understand to be the lips, the tongue, both tip and root, which are all three moveable; and the palate, which is a fixture,—the anvil, as it were, on which the lingual sounds are fashioned. Under each of the moveable organs, the lips,

the tip of the tongue, and the root of the tongue, five letters range themselves, and these five of each order have towards one another a striking and beautiful analogy.

Let us take the organs of speech, then, in the sequence which is the most natural, beginning with those external, and proceeding inward and backwards; and we shall have

5 lip-sounds, (Labials)	p, b, f, v, m.
5 tip o' th' tongue sounds, (Linguo-palatals*)	t, d, th = θ, dh, n.
5 root o' th' tongue sounds, (Gutturals)	k, g, kh = χ, gh, ng.

In these three Orders, the first letter of each series expresses

\* In Greek Grammars, the order of mutes consisting of *τ, θ, δ*, are, I conceive, misalled *dentals*: For, as it is the first letter in each of the three orders that gives origin to the rest and a name to the whole, and as the teeth are no way concerned in pronouncing any but the aspirate *θ*, (the *t* and the *d* bringing into play the tongue and palate alone,) there appears to be a manifest impropriety, according to our mode of giving utterance to these letters, in calling them *dentals*. As to the origin of the misnomer, my conjecture is this: It was in Italy, in the days of Boccaccio and Petrarch, that the study of the Greek language began to revive, after the darkness of the middle ages; and in the first Greek Grammars composed by Italians, the order of mutes which I have called Linguo-palatal, received the name of *dentals* for this reason, that the letter *t* is pronounced in Italy somewhat differently from the same letter with us. In our utterance of that letter the tongue and palate only are concerned: whereas in the Italian *t*, there is an approximation of the tip of the tongue to the roots of the upper row of teeth, so as to bring the two slightly into contact, and thus to lead, naturally enough, to the epithet *dental*. Of this process in Italian pronunciation any one may satisfy himself, by listening to an educated Tuscan or Roman, when reciting the first line of Tasso,—*Canto l'arme pietose o' capitano*. It will be found that his pronunciation of the *t*, in *canto*, differs from ours of the Latin *canto* in this, that it gives a softer sound, intermediate between the acute *t* and the aspirate *th*, to effect which the tongue barely touches the teeth. As, however, there is no ground for thinking that the ancient Greeks gave this soft sound to the letter *τ*, and as it is a sound unknown in our own Tongue, the epithet '*dentales*,' commonly applied to that order of mutes, serves only to embarrass the learner, and might be well exchanged for *linguo-palatal*, which indicates the organs employed in pronouncing all the eleven letters of this order except the aspirates of *t* and *d*.

the radical articulation, whence spring the other letters of that order. It is the primitive type on which the rest are formed, either by modification or addition. The manner of their affiliation and derivation will be understood from the following statement:—

It is usual, in Greek and other grammars, to speak of three Orders of *mutes*, and to enumerate three or more letters under each: but the truth is, that it is to the first letter only of each order—p, t, k,—that the term *mute* is strictly applicable. Of these and these only can it be affirmed with truth, that any attempt to produce the sound which belongs to them, without the assistance of a vowel either before or after, will prove abortive, and will have no effect but to fix the organs in such a position as to obstruct altogether the egress of sound. If, while they are so fixed, we produce in the throat or *fauces*, by an act of the will, the hollow muffled sound described at page 97, and there called the *grave murmur*, and then add a vowel to the mute, we shall give utterance to the second letter in each series, viz. b, d, g hard, which are distinguished from the type solely by the *addition* of this inarticulate sound in the throat. The aspirates, again, which are φ, θ, χ, are *modifications* effected by forcing the breath through the fixed position which the organs assume in p, t, and k: and if we add to these three aspirates the *grave murmur*, we have then the aspirates of b, d, and g, namely, v, dh, and gh.\* In producing the nasal sounds of the three orders—m, n, and ng—the fixed position of the primary type is retained, and the sound is produced by throwing the volume of it into the cavity of the nose.

But inasmuch as the tip of the tongue is the most flexible part of the vocal instrument, and most conveniently situated for taking advantage of the palate in eliciting diversities of sound, we need not be surprised to find—in addition to the five letters on last page corresponding so beautifully to the same

\* The aspirates of d and g have single characters in the Anglo-Saxon and Sanscrit alphabets: viz.  $\text{ð}$  and  $\text{ḡ}$ . The Sanscrit has also a character for ng.

number in the order before and after—a considerable number also of simple sounds peculiar to this organ, and as such, requiring single characters to denote them in a philosophical alphabet. Of these I conceive there are not less than six, in three cognate pairs, viz.: the liquids, l, r; the sibilants, s, z, and sh, zh. Thus the number of letters under the second order turns out to be eleven, and under all the three orders, twenty-one CONSONANTS.

One character remains, as yet unattached to any class or order,—the letter h. It is a sort of middle term between Vowel and Consonant; but as it approximates to the nature of the former rather than of the latter, it may be appended to the list of Vowel sounds; and thus we shall have the following enumeration and classification of 29 primitive, uncompounded, indivisible elements of human speech, which we propose as an attempt to construct a

## PHILOSOPHICAL ALPHABET.

## VOWELS.

a, e, η, i, o, u, v, h, . . . . . 7+1 = 8

## CONSONANTS.

## Orders—

## I. Lip-sounds,

(Labials,) . . . . . p, b, f, v, m, 5

## II. Tip o' th' tongue sounds,

(Linguo-palatals,) t, d, θ, δ, n, 5 }  
l, r, s, z, sh, zh, 6 } = 11

## III. Root o' th' tongue sounds,

(Gutturals,) . . . . . k, g, χ, Ƴ, ng, 5

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\* Although the last two elementary sounds are represented by adding an h to s and z, I hesitate to call them *aspirates* of s, z: they are rather modifications of them, and such as some persons, and even whole tribes of people, are unable to pronounce. The sh was a common sound among the Hebrews, and their alphabet has a single character for it: but to the Ephraimites it was a foreign sound which they could not compass: and their want of this power appears to have cost their lives to two-and-forty thousand of them.—See Book of Judges, c. xiii. v. 6.

I have been led, in the foregoing Note, to indulge in speculations which have no direct bearing on the elementary teaching of our own vernacular tongue. It was, nevertheless, with a view to suggest hints for simplifying and facilitating that first step on the threshold of learning, that the discussion was introduced here. To teachers, who have not already adopted something of the kind, I would venture to recommend the experiment, of imparting to beginners a knowledge of the English alphabet, not in the usual way by insisting on their committing to memory the names of the letters as they stand there, but by making them familiar with their forms and sounds, as they are classified on the principle already explained, and arranged in cognate sets according to the organs of voice employed in pronouncing them; care being taken to commence with those in which the child, in his first efforts to learn by imitation, shall have the advantage both of hearing the sound, and of seeing the conformation of the organs of the teacher. To give the experiment a fair chance of success, it would be advisable to revert to the practice, in use among our forefathers, of *prefixing* the vowel required to give issue to the sound, instead of appending it; to say, for example, *ip, ib, it, id, ik, ig*, &c. instead of pee, bee, tee, dee, ka, &c. all of which throw the main sound into the back-ground, while thought and memory naturally dwell upon the last letter pronounced.

A requisite no less necessary, perhaps, for the success of the experiment, would be, that the schoolmaster should have courage to contend with the ignorance, presumption, and prejudices of parents, who are apt to think that the first and most indispensable step in their child's "schooling" is, that he shall be able to say the common alphabet trippingly on the tongue, from a to z; an effort which to a child is equally painful and useless;—painful, because there is no tie to hold the letters together in the memory, and useless, because he never meets with the letters again in the same sequence, till he come to consult a dictionary.

There is much indeed to be said in favour of a plan of teaching to read, according to which the learning of the letters



individually is postponed to a later period, and syllabic substituted for alphabetic reading. It may assuredly be made a question, whether the ordinary practice of naming separately the single letters which compose a syllable before the child pronounces it, do not complicate instead of simplifying the process, and add a fresh difficulty, instead of smoothing the way, to the learner. It must do so at least so long as the single letters are pronounced according to the method generally adopted. Is the child assisted, it may well be asked, in arriving at the right pronunciation of the word *jug*, by being taught to say first *dzha*, *z-oo*, *dzhee*? Or why should it be thought a necessary preliminary to the pronouncing of the word *gig*, that he should say *dzhee*, *z-ee*, *dzhee*—*Gig*? And might not these preliminary processes be dispensed with, and the child taught at once to connect the visible signs *jug* and *gig*, with the sound of the word, and, where that can be done, with the figure of the object placed before him?

It is scarcely necessary to warn the reader against supposing that, in throwing out these hints, I intend them to be regarded in any other light than as grammatical speculations, or that I contemplate the possibility or desirableness of our present alphabet being superseded by that which I have submitted to his judgment as a theory of elementary sounds. Still less would I be supposed to give any countenance to what is called *phonetic teaching*, the principle of which (as explained in a periodical called the *Phonetic Nuz*.) is, to spell words according to the sound of the letters. Such a scheme, if we conceive it to be acted on, would entirely change our present orthography, which, with all its anomalies, is so frequently a key to etymology, and would render all books hitherto printed illegible to the next generation. The only practical deductions I would draw from the discussion are, that the child's understanding and powers of observation should be trained along with his memory in acquiring a knowledge of the letters; and that the sequence or succession of characters, as they stand in our alphabet, need not be learned by heart till a later period, when it would be acquired with comparative facility.

## NOTE ON PAGE 96.

## GREEK ALPHABET.

It might be thought, on a cursory view of the Greek Alphabet, that it is entitled to rank as high above other alphabets in copiousness and precision, as the language itself is admitted to be superior in these respects to all other forms of speech; and the most perfect organ for the communication of thought; and the idea might seem to be countenanced by its possessing two pairs of long and short vowels, and a sibilant attached to each order of mutes. But so far from deserving this distinction, the Greek is chargeable, not only with the same want of philosophical arrangement and sequence of letters as the rest of European alphabets, but also with more numerous instances both of redundance and deficiency in its characters. Among the redundant letters must be reckoned  $\psi = \pi\zeta$ ,  $\zeta = \tau\zeta$  or  $\delta\zeta$ , and  $\xi = \chi\zeta$ . These are not alphabetic characters, but contracted forms; and the short  $\circ$ , and long  $\omega$ , are merely different characters for the same organic sound, convenient indeed in use, but out of place in a strictly philosophical alphabet. They are not even certain guides in prosody, seeing that it is quite common in Homer to find  $\omega$  and even  $\varphi$  the terminating short syllable of a dactyle. The characters wanting are more numerous still. It has no single character for the Italian  $u$  = English  $oo$ ; nor for  $v$ ,  $\text{đ}$ ,  $sh$ ,  $zh$ ,  $gh$ , and  $ng$ . Discarding, therefore, the double consonants, and leaving one character for the vowel  $\circ$ , we reduce the Greek alphabet to twenty; leaving it *nine* short of the signs required in the preceding Note. Whether the sounds of these nine were wanting in the oral use of their language by the ancient Greeks, or whether they gave different functions to the same letter, are points which I do not pretend to determine.

## NOTE ON PAGE 147.

## RECENT CHANGES IN HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

During the term of my connection with the High School, I had very little communication with the municipal Body called the Town Council, who are the Patrons; and the little which I had, related almost solely to the accommodation required for the increasing number of scholars in attendance, never to the regulation of the studies, or to the manner of employing the hours during which the teacher and his pupils were together. I never dreamt of consulting the Patrons as to what plan of teaching I should adopt, or what books I should use, or even what holidays I should give.\* The innovations on the established discipline of the school, which have been described in the text of this volume, were introduced and carried out without leave asked or sanction obtained from that Body. And all this proceeded, not from a spirit of insubordination, or defiance of authority, or undue notion of my own prerogatives; but simply because it seemed as little to occur to the Patrons to interfere or meddle with such matters, as it did to me to crave their permission or concurrence.

But these were the good easy times of the unreformed Town Council. After the passing of the Municipal Reform Act, a new race of councillors sprang up, who seemed to think less of gold chains and good dinners, than of their rights and privileges, the dispensing of patronage, the power of control, and

\* One year, for example, on the 30th of April, the weather promising well, I announced, *sponte mea*, that the morrow should be a holiday *in honorem Kalendarum Maiarum*; and, while admonishing the boys how to enjoy it, I observed that something was going on which amused them, on one of the lower forms. I sent a monitor to enquire, and he brought me a slip of paper, on which was written in pencil the following *impromptu* by a very young member of the Class:—

The Calends of May  
Is the cause of our play:  
So I'm going to fish,  
Which has long been my wish.

the conscientious discharge of their duties as public functionaries. Their intentions were pure, and their zeal unbounded ; and in dealing with the ordinary concerns of their brief authority—such as the regulation of their labouring finances, the administration of justice, and the appointment of officers—they shewed an amount of industry, ability, and disinterestedness, such as had never been exhibited by that Body before.

It would be a rash thing, however, to say, that in matters educational their zeal has been always guided by knowledge, or tempered with discretion ; least of all can that be affirmed of their latest act of legislation in reference to the High School. Within the last few months, the Corporation has issued an order in Council, prescribing to the Rector and Masters the subjects which are to be taught, and the precise time to be allotted to each :—an Act which, unless it be rescinded by their successors in office, will go far to effect a material change, and, as it appears to me, by no means for the better, in the constitution and objects of that ancient seminary. And this has been done in the face of a strong and well-argued remonstrance against it from a majority of the Masters, and with the cold acquiescence, not the cordial assent, of the minority.

Without going into all the particulars of this programme and time-table, there are certain results deducible from an inspection of it, to which it is right that public attention should be drawn.

The High School of Edinburgh, as stated before, (p. 89.) was founded for the teaching of the Latin language only ; and in point of fact, during the period of my incumbency, the four school hours, (from *nine* to *eleven*, and from *twelve* to *two*,) were devoted to that object in all the classes. And for my own part, I can truly say, that I found the time too short rather than too long for accomplishing every thing connected with the Latin lessons of the day. But, in the 'Prospectus' lately issued, the allowance of Latin hours is reduced to exactly one-half of what it was in my time, and in all time before me. Instead of *twenty-two* hours in the week being dedicated to Latin in each of the five classes (*four*

on the other five days and *two* on the Saturday), the Latin time is now limited as follows : In the first and second classes to *ten* hours ; in the third and fourth, to *thirteen* ; and in the Rector's class to *nine*. If then we reckon up the entire time given to Latin during one week, in all the classes, the account stands thus :—

Under the old system,	110 hours.
Reduced by subsequent Regulations to	55 „
Difference,	55 „

It is but fair, however, to state, that of those fifty-five hours subtracted from the Latin, twenty-five are allotted to Greek ; and in any arrangement which gives additional time to Greek lessons, though at the expense of the Latin, I heartily concur. But this arrangement was no doing of the same Council which issued the present Prospectus: it dates much farther back, and was indeed no more than an extension to the four succeeding days of the week, of the practice introduced in my time of reading Greek Testament instead of *Buchanan's Psalms* every Monday morning.\* This was a salutary change, but one which the framers of the new programme were not the men to have originated. On the contrary, if they be permitted to follow out unchecked their obvious purpose, it is more likely that the Greek time will be encroached on as well as the Latin, and that hours withdrawn from both will be set apart for Chemistry, Social Economy, Geology, Phrenology and other occult sciences, till the classics be finally expelled from the School.

But let us observe how the 55 hours withdrawn from the

\* The practice of making Buchanan's Latin Version of the Psalms of David the weekly lesson for the first two hours of school on the Mondays, prevailed when I was a pupil of Dr. Adam's class, and so it was when I succeeded him. I made no change for some years, out of respect for the principle which dictated the arrangement. But subsequently, in conversing with the late Francis Horner, who had been my fellow-pupil in the same class, when I happened to express to him my regret that the school-hours for Greek were so limited, he suggested the idea of substituting Greek Testament for Buchanan, as a lesson for Sunday preparation quite as unobjectionable ; and upon this valuable hint I acted, and continued to act ever after.

Latin have been disposed of in the last Prospectus of the Council.

Instead of Latin in all the classes, and in the Rector's class the additional subjects of Greek and Ancient Geography, as these three had been taught there for two-thirds of a century by Dr. Adam, Dr. Carson, and myself, the branches now enjoined to be taught, and taught by *Classical Masters*, are the following:—

1st, Religious Knowledge; 2nd, Studies in English Poetry; 3rd, English Grammar and Composition; 4th, Geography; 5th, History; 6th, *Introduction to the Sciences*; 7th, *Natural History*; 8th, '*Laws of Matter and Motion*;' \* 9th, *Mechanics*; 10th, *Astronomy*; 11th, Latin; 12th, Greek. Here are twelve subjects set down in the Prospectus, and all ordered to be taught a certain number of hours in the week, and the teaching devolved upon five men, who were bound by the terms of their appointment to teach the last two branches only,—men selected to fill their office for eminent scholarship, not for scientific attainment, and of whom it would be no disparagement to say, that they are scarcely more fit to give instruction in many of these branches than the Patrons themselves;—men who, when such things are required of them, might justly and *legally* appeal to the terms of their commission, and decline doing that which is not nominated in the bond.†

\* Meaning, I presume, the Properties of Matter, and the Laws of Motion;—a subject comprehending, as announced in the text-book used, Statics, Pyronomy, and Dynamics ('O words of fear To school-boy's ear!') Yet this subject is deemed so elementary, that it is allotted to the Master of the *third* class, who teaches boys of eleven years of age.

† The following is an extract from the Memorial of the Masters to the College Committee of the Town-Council:—

"The Classical Masters are already over-tasked; their time and energies are not only occupied but consumed by the number, diversity, and difficulty of their official duties. They are bound by the terms of their appointment, by the constitution of the School, and by the fundamental conditions of a sound education, to train the youth entrusted to their care in the languages and literature of Greece, Rome, and England, and to base that instruction on a solid groundwork of Grammar, Philology, History, Antiquities, and Criticism. They are required, moreover, to instruct their pupils in a knowledge of General History and Geography, in the art of Composition, and in the Evidences and Doctrines

But in case these twelve subjects of study should not furnish sufficient occupation and accomplishment for boys between the ages of eight and sixteen, or should not form a bait sufficiently alluring to parents, provision is made in the "Optional department" for instruction, by a different set of teachers, in any or all of the following branches:—

1st, Writing; 2nd, Arithmetic; 3rd, Book-keeping; 4th, Algebra; 5th, Geometry; 6th, Practical Mathematics; 7th, French; 8th, German;—and thus the dozen of subjects is raised to a score.

To men who unite, to a practical acquaintance with the business and details of education, a turn for speculating on the right method of training the young mind, the statement just made is of itself sufficient to demonstrate the impropriety of such a course of instruction. *They* need not be told that the aim of a liberal education is, to discipline the youthful faculties, to form habits of searching inquiry and patient analysis, to rouse a spirit which will not rest contented till it has mastered and exhausted every subject it grapples with; and thus to equip the student with an implement, of keen edge and finely tempered, which may enable him to win his way

of Revealed Religion; and it is now proposed to charge them with the labour and responsibility of a new department of education, involving a large addition of mental exertion and of bodily toil, without the addition of one minute to their allotted time, or of one Master to their official staff. For the adequate performance of his various duties, an efficient teacher of Natural Science, not less than a competent instructor in Classics, Mathematics, and Arithmetic, requires those professional qualifications which result from a specific course of preparatory discipline. He must possess not only the requisite knowledge of his subject, but also a technical fitness for elucidating it, whether by oral exposition or by visible demonstration; and this technical fitness can be acquired only by a long, and, it may be, toilsome apprenticeship.

"It cannot, therefore, be reasonably expected, that a Classical Master in the High School, or in any educational institution whatsoever, should combine such scientific accomplishments as are now described, with that refined accuracy of scholarship, and peculiar aptitude for conveying it into the minds of youth, which enable him to prosecute the primary business of his own vocation. If there be any weight in the consideration thus adduced, it is warrantable to conclude, that the Masters of the High School should not be compelled to introduce Physical, any more than Mathematical Science, into the curriculum of their respective classes."

successfully in the conflict and competition that await him. To such men it would be superfluous to prove, that to fritter down the time and distract the attention of a boy with so great a variety of lessons, and on subjects so multifarious, is to ensure mediocrity and misty conception in all of them, to cram the memory with fragmentary portions of knowledge, which never go through the process of digestion and assimilation, and to brush off the bloom, so to speak, from those branches of instruction which ought to be reserved, in all their freshness and integrity, for a period of life when the intellect shall be matured, and the mind better prepared to comprehend and estimate aright the sublime discoveries of science.

But it is vain to expect that men of this stamp should ever constitute a majority of the body in whom are vested the property, patronage, and direction of the High School. Nevertheless, as the members of that body are in general men of shrewdness and sagacity, who, in the ordinary matters that come before them, are disposed to listen to reason, and seldom fail to arrive at sound conclusions, it is not perhaps being too sanguine to expect from them the patient hearing of an argument intended to prove, that in this particular case they have been misled, by false views and impressions, to confound things which are altogether distinct and dissimilar. If the enactment complained of were a sudden ebullition of misdirected zeal, originating in the idiosyncrasy of a particular Council and with which the public had no sympathy, it might be left to die out and be forgotten. But the misconception I speak of prevails over a large portion of the community; and the programme lately issued is but the last and crowning act of a long series of anti-classical aggressions. This is an assertion which will be fully verified by a brief retrospect of the last thirty years.

Symptoms of a desire on the part of the Town-Council to interfere with the established discipline of the High School shewed themselves not long after I left it. The year 1827 was signalized by the introduction of that comparatively harmless measure called the 'General Knowledge Class,' which lingered



in a most ineffective state, till it became the derision alike of the pupils and the teachers, and was quietly allowed to sink into well-merited oblivion. But the *animus* that dictated it survived, and soon after received a new impulse from the agitation of the Reform Bill. When that Bill was made the law of the land, "Reform" became the watchword in every department of Church and State, from the Kirk-Session to the House of Lords; and it was then that the Town-Council of the day proceeded to overt acts of farther and more serious aggression.

In July 1834, came on at the Council Board the discussion of a motion, of which notice had been previously given by the Dean of Guild, "That a Committee be appointed to enquire into the state of education in the High School." The motion being carried, the Committee soon after addressed to the Teachers a set of Queries, avowedly suggestive of changes to come. That such was their meaning, will be readily understood from the Answer returned to them by Dr. Carson, the Rector; a document of which, though it does not seem to have found its way into the Minutes of Council, I have been fortunate enough to procure an authentic copy. It is here printed for the first time, and will be read with interest, as the deliberate judgment of one of the most distinguished scholars and teachers of his day. It is as follows:—

*Unto the Honourable the Members of the College Committee of the Town-Council of Edinburgh.*

"I cannot return my Answers to the Queries which have been transmitted to me by your Clerk, without expressing deep regret and alarm at the terms in which a Motion lately made in the Council has been announced in the public Newspapers,—a Motion, namely, to enquire into the *state of education* in the High School. I am most thoroughly convinced, that the Patrons and Guardians of that seminary entertain towards it every benevolent and friendly sentiment; yet such is the form of expression in which the Motion meets the public

eye, that every reader interprets it as a virtual censure,—as a public declaration on the part of its Patrons, that there is something *wrong* in the *state* of education in the School—that there is some undefined evil for whose removal no ordinary remedy can be of any avail. If indeed the Honourable Patrons have good authority for believing that the *state* of education is not such as it ought to be—that the teachers are wanting in capacity and industry—that their pupils are less perfectly initiated in Classical learning now than those who preceded them were—that at the University they shew themselves decidedly inferior to the pupils sent from similar seminaries,—then it may have become a sacred duty to make those who send their children to the High School from England, Ireland, and the several counties of Scotland, fully aware, that the *state* of education in the High School demands enquiry and correction. But if the very reverse of all this is the fact, such declarations as that recently put forth are calculated to do irreparable injury to the institution, and cannot serve a single beneficial purpose. The Honourable Patrons are perfectly aware that, though the High School at a remote period was invested with exclusive rights by an authority to which the Sovereign himself bowed with reverence, and though these rights were confirmed to it by repeated Acts of the Magistrates and Council, they have long ceased to be insisted on, and no citizen is now bound to have his children educated there. The Honourable Patrons know, that while the University enjoys privileges which in some measure command the attendance of those who are in preparation for particular professions, that while the clergy of the City have a definite and certain income, the Rector and Masters of the High School depend for their success—for their very existence—upon their character as men and teachers. No professional men are so entirely dependent on opinion, sometimes on caprice, as they are; and in a city like Edinburgh, where rivals to the public teacher may be found in every street,—men nothing loth to accelerate the downfall of the established seminary, while they are themselves subject to no scrutiny and no controul,—no-

thing can sustain the labourer in the High School but the most unsuspected, unimpeached, and unblemished name, accompanied and illustrated by unquestionable and unquestioned professional skill. When these, therefore, are virtually called in question, when a declaration comes from the highest authority, couched in terms which may imply, and by the courtesy of the public are construed into, a condemnatory intimation of some dangerous lurking evil, there are no consequences, however ruinous and fatal, that may not, on the justest grounds, be apprehended and anticipated by a seminary so constituted and so dependent as the High School is.

"The first Query put by the Committee refers to the Branches taught, and the time occupied in each daily.

"The branches are, Latin, Greek, and *Ancient Geography*.

"The hours are distributed in the following manner:—

"From 9 till 10, Elementary Greek—reading Greek exercises.

10 — 11, Latin, Roman Antiquities, &c.

11 — 12, Higher Greek Class.

12 — 2, Latin.

2 — 3, Lower Greek—on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; on Tuesdays and Thursdays, *Ancient Geography*.

"These hours have been devoted to the branches now specified, since I became a teacher in the School. They were appropriated to the duties now stated by Dr. Adam and Mr. Pillans; and no change in their arrangement can be attempted without depriving me of the means of following, as I can, the footsteps of those eminently distinguished teachers who preceded me. They in fact cannot be encroached upon without abridging so entirely the Rector's power of doing what is expected of him, as to threaten the utter ruin of the School as a classical seminary; and the Committee know well, that it is as a classical seminary only that it has earned the reputation which it has hitherto enjoyed.

"The second Query regards the number of Pupils for the

present and the preceding seven years. The numbers were, in

Years.	Pupils enrolled.
1825-26 . .	148.
1826-27 . .	175.
1827-28 . .	153.
1828-29 . .	172.
1829-30 . .	162.
1830-31 . .	168.
1831-32 . .	133.
1832-33 . .	161.
1833-34 . .	133.

"The above abstract proves that the number of pupils who have for the last eight years attended my class, has undergone such trifling variation, that any remarks upon the subject seem to me uncalled for and unnecessary. In 1831-32 the decrease was considerable; but it may in some measure be accounted for by the fact, sufficiently well known to many, that, when the High School met in October, the opinion was very general over the country, that I would be removed to Glasgow; many country boys were, I know, in consequence of this kept back, and these form annually a considerable portion of my class. I scarcely think the College Committee can suppose it right that I should be required to give reasons for the diminution or increase of my class in any single year,—which, as in the instance just stated, may be entirely accidental. I may, therefore, without any hesitation declare, that it has declined in no ratio whatever, and I do not admit that, except by the most unfair and illiberal construction put upon the numbers, it can be justly said to have at all declined.

"It is, however, undeniable, though I am not directly required by the queries put to me to advert to or explain the causes of the fact, that the general number in the School has of late sustained a considerable diminution. On this point conjectures respecting the causes that have led to it only can be formed; for no man can dive into another's breast, and see the reasons which prompt him to give or to withhold. There

are, however, some circumstances that may be supposed to have had a tendency at least to produce the change, and to these I may be permitted shortly to refer.

" 1. There seems of late years to have been in extensive operation some very general cause to which I cannot give a specific name, for although the High School is, so far at least as I have heard, the only establishment of the kind that has been called upon to assign reasons for the decrease of its numbers, I have the most satisfactory proof, that a simultaneous decrease has taken place in all the leading Schools of England and Scotland. I know this to be the case in England, and the Committee may be informed, from other authority than mine, whether the Grammar School of Glasgow, and the Edinburgh Academy, the only great Schools in Scotland besides the High School, have during the same period retrograded or advanced.

" 2. The middle ranks in society have of late years laboured under considerable depression, and I believe this is very generally admitted to have been the case with one profession in Edinburgh, from which, when it was in a more flourishing state, the High School was accustomed to derive a very great proportion of its pupils, and we may expect to suffer along with it.

" 3. The teacher of Mathematics, four years ago, when the school was very numerously attended, proposed to the Patrons such changes on the hours of classical teaching, that if they had then been gone into, the Patrons of this day would not have had the trouble of instituting the present enquiry,—for the High School would before this time have ceased to exist. To this plan the Classical Masters felt that they were bound, by their duty to themselves, to the Patrons and the public, to make the most strenuous opposition, and the Patrons were satisfied that a change was uncalled for. At the same time there appeared in the Newspapers and other publications, a series of attacks upon classical education generally, but always in connection with the High School specifically and by name. From what quarter these emanated, I neither know nor pre-

tend to say ; but these attacks have been renewed at intervals from that period to the present, and in them the High School has constantly been held forth as the great source of all the monstrous evils with which classical learning has afflicted mankind. Individuals of a grand confederacy of private lecturers have echoed annually, since that period, the same astounding doctrines, and deplored in the most melting and pathetic strains, the folly and stupidity of those who subject their children to the labour which classical learning necessarily requires, while they might be employed in a manner much more agreeable and satisfactory to themselves in listening to lectures, which to children, at the period of life when they attend us, teach nothing, and in witnessing experiments that please, as other toys do, but tend little to strengthen, improve, cultivate and elevate the powers of thought,—that great end which classical learning proposes to itself and always keeps in view. Such insidious attacks as these, continued year after year, are calculated to produce on any establishment, so entirely dependent on public opinion as the High School is, a most pernicious effect ; and I have no doubt that to this, more than to any other cause, is to be attributed the recent diminution in our numbers ; the two circumstances are at least exactly coincident in time, and it is difficult to believe that they are not also inseparably connected.

“ Besides these conjectured causes to which I have alluded, there may perhaps be many others that may have led to this enquiry. Aspersions may, for instance, have been cast upon the public or private character of my colleagues or myself, and communicated to the Patrons ; if so, of them I have never heard, and may likely be the last to hear. If such be the case, I, as their head, am bound to say of my colleagues in the classical department, that more able, zealous, conscientious, and intelligent teachers are scarcely to be found, and against them I cannot believe that the shadow of reproach can with justice be advanced. But that they shall always command classes equal in amount, or constantly advancing in numerical strength,—that the High School should not have its seasons

of ebb and flow, like every institution that exists, and every individual that breathes,—are expectations that ought not to be entertained, and can never be realized. Is the High School the only Institution of the City, to which the imputation of a decrease in its numbers can be laid? Is it true that the literary classes in the University have during the same period sustained considerable diminutions? Have the Honourable Patrons been called upon to institute an enquiry into the state of education there, because the classes may not be quite so fully attended, as in past years they have been? Owing to its constitution and privileges, such an enquiry can do little injury to the higher Institution; the impression already made on the public mind, that it is necessary in the lower, carries along with it the certainty of the most dangerous results.

“The third Query refers to a subject which requires from the Honourable Patrons the most serious consideration, the most deliberate and cautious forethought. I have been long enough in the High School to witness two attempts made by its Patrons to introduce a change in its system of education, both of which most completely failed; and there can be no doubt, that if such attempts do not succeed, they must inevitably prove hurtful to the School. In 1820, a protest was by a member of Council entered upon the City records, and adhered to by several of his colleagues in office, against an innovation which was then introduced into the School; at the end of the first year it was found that the measure protested against could not be safely persevered in, and at the end of one year the resolution was rescinded, and the system of the School restored to its former state. Again, in 1827, French and Mathematics were introduced, under the direction and by appointment of the Patrons. The former of these did not succeed, and was in a few years silently abandoned; the latter has turned out as singular a failure as perhaps, considering the clamour made at the time for the introduction of the branch, can possibly be conceived. It is, I believe, not very wide of the truth to say, that the teacher of that branch, though a gentleman of very considerable reputa-

tion and pretensions, and though he was bound to teach at a much lower rate than any private master does, never has been able, from a School of 600, 700, or even 750 boys, to muster a class of 40. Now, whatever may be alleged to the contrary, nothing can, I think, demonstrate more decidedly and unanswerably, that, compared with the value put upon classical learning by the citizens of Edinburgh, Mathematics are held of very little or no account, and might have continued to be taught, not only without injury to the public, but with greater convenience to the pupils, by the private masters who may every where be found. If, therefore, after these unsuccessful experiments, the Patrons are prepared to resort to others, I have only to observe, that should their plan not succeed, the failure will prove deeply prejudicial to the whole School, and the consequence will likely be imputed to that department of the School which has no power to prevent or restrain the evil.—All my experience and observation leads to the conclusion, that the more purely and extensively classical the High School is, the greater will be its success. Classics, Arithmetic, and Writing, afford sufficient employment to the young pupil during his attendance on the High School; such parents as wish their children to be instructed in other branches, may find the means of attaining their object in every district of the City, and the High School will not be exposed to the danger that must press heavily on the whole, if any branch of education in it languish and fail of enjoying the expected degree of success.

“If the College Committee wish me to say what will give permanent stability to the High School, and sustain most effectually its reputation in that branch of education for which it is and has always been known and famous, my opinion, founded upon the most mature reflection, is, that the salaries of the four Masters, instead of being, as at present, £20, should be £200, per annum, and that of the Rector, which is £33, 6s. 8d., which has evidently undergone no change since Scotch money was current, and is smaller than that of a parochial Schoolmaster, should not be less than £300, or £350,



per annum. I do not by this plan propose that the Rector and Masters should have a higher income than a good class would at present afford. The School fees ought then to be reduced to 10s. 6d., or at the utmost 12s. 6d. per quarter. By this plan the benefit of the School would be rendered more accessible to the middle ranks; the self-elected teachers, who abound at present in the city, finding their employment unprofitable, would abandon it, and the children of the united city would again be concentrated within its High School. The Masters of the High School have no houses, no lands allotted to them,—which form no unimportant addition to the limited salary of the parochial teacher; and those who have experienced the expence of bringing up a family in Edinburgh respectably,—that the Honourable Patrons of the High School wish their public teachers to have the means of doing so, I cannot doubt,—must know, that £200, annually, will hold no temptation to idleness, or neglect of duty, on the part of those to whom it is awarded. The whole sum thus received by the Head Master and his four colleagues, would not be more than one-eighth of the income of the Head Master of Eton School, who certainly has not severer duties to perform than fall upon the Rector of your School. Can money, expended upon the external embellishment of this city, be so judiciously, so advantageously employed, as that spent in advancing the moral and intellectual character and culture of our youth, in enlarging the circle of usefulness to that seminary, which has long been, and notwithstanding the temporary decrease of its numbers still is, attended by more pupils than any classical seminary in Europe at this moment contains,—and whose pupils are every day, and in every region of the globe, demonstrating that superiority of mental strength and energy which the system hitherto pursued has been so powerfully instrumental in imparting to the young.

“In conclusion, I am sure the College Committee will give me full credit for it when I aver, that no human being has, or ought to have, so deep an interest in the School as I have, and that whatever has now been said, for the purpose of per-

suading or dissuading, is the well-considered deduction from many years of experience, and proceeds from the sincerest and most anxious wish for the prosperity and glory of the High School.

(Signed) "A. R. CARSON."

Edinburgh, July 1834.

This spirited remonstrance of the Rector, backed as it was by Answers to the same effect from the four Masters, seems to have quashed for the time the projects of the innovators. The final Report of a Committee '*tam multa et præclara minantis*' in the outset, was in these terms:—

"In obedience to the remit from the Council, dated 1st July last, your Committee transmitted a series of Queries to each of the Masters of the High School. Answers have been returned, almost all of which concur in stating that no extensive change could be made in the plan of education there followed, with any advantage to the establishment. . . . .

"Your Committee concur in opinion with the teachers, that it would not be prudent at present to make any extensive alteration in the classical department, or the constitution of the School." The date of this Report is Sept. 2. 1834.

The only novelty which they ventured to recommend was the introduction of a French Teacher into the Optional Department;—a proposal acceded to by the Council, and to which there could be no reasonable objection. Considering, indeed, how large a proportion of English words derived from the Latin come to us, in a modified form, through the medium of the French, the teaching of that language in the higher Forms of the School, by a person well acquainted with Latin as well as French, is a very proper addition to the Classical discipline.

Meanwhile, however, a crusade was being preached against the Classics, with all the zeal of Peter the Hermit, by certain popular writers of the day, and the successive Town-Councils made common cause with the crusaders. In the Journals and Periodicals of the day all knowledge was repre-

sented as not worth having, or at least not worth imparting to our youth, which did not relate to things external,—things which we can see and handle and smell and taste and make subservient to the use and gratification of the senses, so as to minister to the physical comfort and improve the material condition of ourselves or our fellow-men. All schools set apart by their founders for the teaching of Greek and Latin and the cultivation of ancient literature, were denounced as antiquated relics of barbarism, pedantry, and mediæval ignorance. The instruction given in these Institutions of our forefathers, and the methods employed there, were contrasted, to their disadvantage, with those of the popular schools which had sprung up abundantly out of the novel systems of Bell and Lancaster. The old endowed establishments, if they could not be abolished at once, were to be remodelled—the nuisance of the dead languages to be speedily abated, and replaced by the study of external nature, and the wonders of “Physical Science.”

So strong did the current of public\* opinion set in this direction, that it seemed to me a duty which I owed to the position I had held in the High School, and the Chair which I have ever since had the honour to fill in the University, to bear my testimony against what I conceived to be the perversion of a good principle, and to make a stand in defence of scholarlike acquirement and classical discipline. I availed myself accordingly of the opening of a College Session, in November 1836, to deliver three Lectures from the Humanity Chair, ‘On the proper objects and methods of education, in reference to the different orders of society, and on the relative utility of Classical training.’ These Lectures were soon after published. They had been written, it appeared, from similar motives, and—though without concert or even mutual

\* I use the term public only as applicable to Scotland, or rather indeed to Edinburgh. So different was the state of things south of the Tweed, that the anti-classical movement here was contemporaneous with that general effort to extend and improve Classical education, which led to the planting of Proprietary Schools in various parts of England, in all of which the teaching of Greek and Latin took the lead.

acquaintance on the part of the authors—simultaneously with a valuable contribution to the same cause from the pen of the late Dr. Michael Russell, titular Bishop of Glasgow.\* Our joint efforts, however, were unavailing. The floodgates of Reform had been thrown open, and the feeble barriers we had erected were soon swept into oblivion. The two pamphlets fell almost still-born from the press.

For some years after, it is true, the agitation of the subject of High School discipline in the Town-Council was less frequent and less aggressive; but it was clear from various indications that the lull was caused by the attraction of other subjects, and the pressure of more urgent business, and not from any change of purpose or opinion. Accordingly, within the last five or six years, the crusade against the Classics has been resumed, with unabated fervour and pertinacity.

One of the first acts of renewed hostility was an attempt to engraft on the High School business two Lectureships, one on Chemistry, and another on Natural History: both of which, after a feeble and feverish existence for two sessions, died at last of inanition.

In the wake of these unsuccessful experiments,—embarrassing to parents no less than to their children, and injurious to the character and prosperity of the School,—came into operation on the 1st Oct. 1851, the present Prospectus and Time-Table, —the most preposterous and unworkable of all the projects which have been successively tried, found wanting, and abandoned. Unpromising, however, as it is, there is some reason to apprehend that it may prove more permanent and do more mischief than any of its ephemeral predecessors, in consequence of the countenance given to the views which it embodies, by the occurrence, during the same year, of the Great Exhibition. Such a display of material wealth, skilled labour, and mechanical ingenuity, could scarcely fail to dazzle the eyes of every beholder, and throw into the shade the more

\* Observations on the Advantages of Classical Learning, viewed as the means of cultivating the youthful mind, and more especially as compared with the studies which it has been proposed to substitute in its stead. By the Rev. M. Russell, LL.D.—*Edinburgh*, 1836.

delicate operations and less appreciable benefits of a culture purely mental. Amidst the exultation one naturally feels in the brilliant success of that marvellous experiment, there is one of its probable results which it is difficult not to anticipate with regret. By encreasing the ardour of pursuit in those physical researches which promise immediate addition to the solid wealth, and the substantial accommodations and luxuries, of the community, it will proportionably tend, I fear, to discountenance refined scholarship and discourage the study of intellectual philosophy. Investigations of a moral, metaphysical, and literary character, are in greater danger than ever of being discarded for microscopical researches into little crannies and corners of material nature. There are lofty, and eminently (though not obviously nor instantaneously) useful speculations, on the nature and principles of the human mind, which have shed a lustre on the names of Hume, Adam Smith, Reid, Dugald Stewart, and Thomas Brown. Built upon a large, profound, and enlightened observation of the faculties, the habits, and the language of man, these speculations lead to the gradual development and final reception of maxims and truths ethical, political, and æsthetical :—truths of universal application, which tend not so much to advance one particular branch of science or art, as to give a right direction to them all, and so to raise our nature in the scale of refined and intellectual existence. Inquiries of this kind, so improving to the individual as well as to the species, are more likely than they were before to be laid aside for the retort and crucible, and conclusions to be arrived at by the evidence of sense, in matters of heat and moisture, of weight and motion and pressure, which claim a superiority, and confer a reputation, to which they are entitled, neither by their importance to society, nor by the character of the minds that conduct the experiments.

In consequence of the large and constantly encreasing number of pupils which repaired to the High School some five and thirty years ago, I thought I had a right to take it for granted, that the instruction there given was considered, by

the public of Scotland of those days, to be worth having; and I took it for granted accordingly.\* But the assaults, which have since been made and are now making on the classics, seem to call upon those who still cling to ancient literature and classical training as the best ground-work of a liberal education, not only to husband their internal resources and improve their methods, but to defend their position and outworks from the attacks of a foreign enemy. The seat of war, instead of being confined to the skirmishing of Edinburgh periodicals, has been transferred to the metropolis of the empire, and the war is waged with weapons furnished from the Crystal Palace, and wielded by the hands of those who are deservedly regarded as the Heroes of the Great Exhibition of 1851.†

Moved mainly, though not solely, by these considerations, I have republished those Lectures in an Appendix, in substance and form the same as when they were first delivered in 1836. The argument, such as it is, was then addressed to a very limited audience, and appeared in print at a time so

\* See Preface, p. vii.

† Symptoms of such undervaluing of mental philosophy and classical studies, have already shewn themselves in a Publication now in progress, entitled "Lectures on the results of the Exhibition, delivered before the Society of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, at the suggestion of H.R.H. Prince Albert." In one of these, delivered 7th January 1852, the following passage occurs:—

"Classical Literature and exact Science are wholly antithetic. If classical literature be sufficient to construct your spinning-jennies and bleach your cottons, your system of instruction is right; but if you are to be braced, and your sinews strengthened, for a hard struggle of industry, is it wise that you should devour poetry, while your competitors eat that which forms the muscles and gives vigour to the sinews?"

Others, I doubt not, under the *prestige* of the Great Exhibition, will echo in future lectures the same sentiments, and some perhaps who may not so readily make the concession which Dr. Lyon Playfair does, when he says elsewhere in his very clever pamphlet, "It would ill become me, or any one, to speak disparagingly of the wisdom to be derived from a study of ancient authors, or to deny the immense importance of a knowledge of classical literature to education generally; nor should I like to see that education confined to stern realities, divested of the graces and poetry of polite literature." It would appear, indeed, that the Doctor quarrels, not so much with the Classics, as with the manner of teaching them: and so far as that goes, I am much disposed to agree with him.

unfavourable to the impartial consideration of it, that, even had it been stated tenfold more strongly than it is, the publication would not have escaped the fate that awaits all *pamphlets* which do not pander to the local prejudices, the political rancour, or the vitiated taste of the majority of readers.

A further inducement to this republication was a belief—whether well founded or not remains to be proved—that there are elements in the present Town-Council (1852) which will make it more accessible to reason than either the Council of 1836, or that which inflicted on the High School the obnoxious Prospectus and Time-table which I have been endeavouring to expose. That emanation of civic wisdom may well be regarded as a first step towards a consummation, devoutly to be deprecated, which was arrived at, many years ago, by the Town-Council of Glasgow;—a body of which our own Corporation has generally been considered as the jealous rival, rather than the humble imitator. Time was, when the Grammar School of Glasgow had, like our own High School, a full complement of five classical teachers,—a Rector and four Masters. In 1830, upon the death of the incumbent, Dr. Chrystal, the office of Rector was abolished by the Glasgow Town-Council; and four years after, two of the Masterships were suppressed. Thus the staff of classical teachers was reduced from five to two; and such is its present constitution. In lieu of Latin and Greek, there were introduced into the Seminary teachers of modern languages, and of that which our civic rulers understand by the much abused term, “science;” and its name was altered from *Grammar School* to *High School*.\* But such rapid and radical changes, how well soever they might suit the latitude of Glasgow, where the cotton-plant thrives better than the olive of Minerva, were not to be attempted, all at once, under the meridian of Edinburgh. Yet the late Council, in sanctioning the programme of study now in force, would seem to have borrowed a leaf from the book of its western rival.

Let us hope, however, that the present Patrons will have

\* See “New Statistical Account of Scotland,” Art. “Glasgow.”

the good sense to cancel it, and will revert to the old constitutional practice of the school, which, without barring improvement in the methods of instruction and in the modes of dealing with young minds, proposes to pursue as a main object, steadily and undistractedly, that mental discipline, moral and intellectual, which best fits a man for performing the duties and encountering the difficulties of life. Let us hope that they will shew themselves alive to the importance of maintaining in its integrity the oldest of our educational establishments ;—not shutting their eyes nor setting their faces against reasonable alterations in conformity with the spirit of a progressive age, but resolved, at the same time, that there shall continue to be, as there has been for the last three centuries, an endowed grammar school in the metropolis of Scotland, to which parents may send their sons who have no desire that their youthful minds should be treated with an *olla podrida* of all the seven sciences, ‘a mouthful of everything and a bellyful of nothing ;’ but rather, that they shall be trained to a strenuous exercise and application of their faculties in one principal direction ; and shall at the same time be so imbued with elegant tastes and made so familiar with ancient literature, that they may be able to hold up their heads among the scholars and gentlemen of England, without blushing for themselves and their native country.

In another point of view, too, the Lectures may be regarded as no inappropriate supplement to the Text of this volume. For though there is much in that text which is intended to bear on the general question as to the educational methods best adapted for the many as well as for the few, yet its main object was to explain and recommend a definite plan of *classical* training ; and without some proof adduced that such training is the best means of acquiring a liberal education, the incredulous upon that point could scarcely be supposed to take much interest in the subject of the book. It is chiefly to the Third Lecture that I would refer both the reader who is sceptical as to the benefits of a classical education, and



those who are avowed advocates either of the Empirical or of the purely Mathematical system of training.

But if it should turn out, as is not unlikely, that I have been too sanguine in expecting to make converts in the Council, or even to gain a patient hearing either from that body or from the public at large, still I shall not regret having put the resuscitated argument into a less perishable shape. It will thus have another chance of surviving its author, and may serve as his protest against what he holds to be the downward tendencies of the present generation.

## ADDITION TO NOTE ON THE ALPHABET.

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The PHILOSOPHICAL ALPHABET, attempted at p. 171, is given below in the form in which the alphabet appears in our grammars. It professes to be classified into groups or brotherhoods of cognate sounds, according to the organs of speech with which they are pronounced, and to be arranged in a natural sequence or order of succession, beginning with the sounds sent forth *aperto ore* and without articulation ; and, of the consonants, taking those first which the lips are employed in giving breath to ; next, those effected by the action of the tip of the tongue upon the palate ; and lastly those, in pronouncing which the root of the tongue is applied to the palate.\*

### VOWELS.

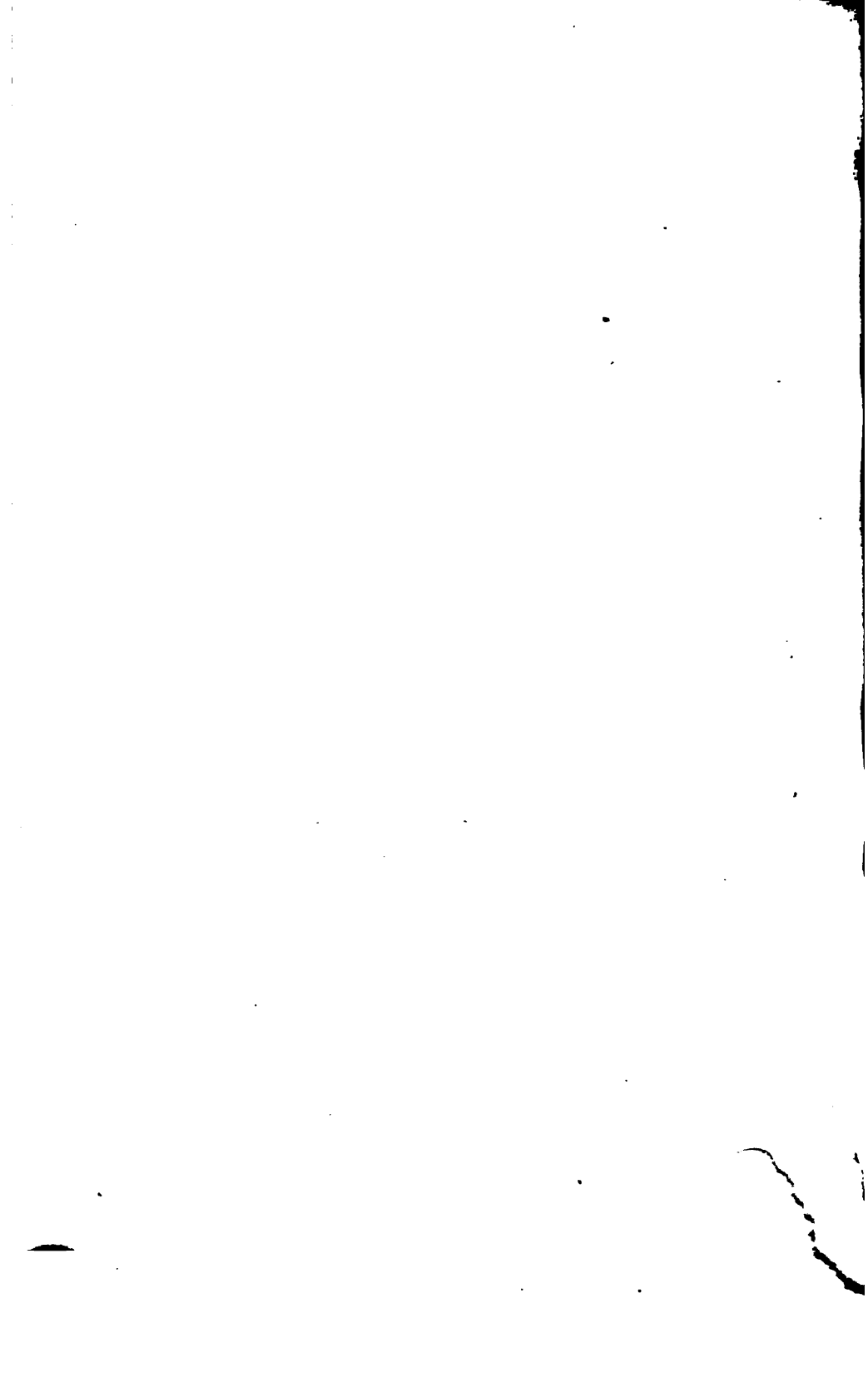
- α, A, the Italian *a*, as in *stava*, or the English in *father*—a middle term between *āll* and *săd*.
- ε, E, the English *a*, whether short, as in *ăpe*, or long, as in *ăcorn*.
- η, the bleat of the sheep, whether the sound be short, as in *ěmmet*, or long, as in *ěmbryo*.
- ι, I, not the English *i* but the European, as we have it in the French *ivre*, the German *ihre*, and the Italian *sia*.
- ο, O, whether short, as in *ōmit*, or long, as in *ōld*, or both long and short, as in *βowm*.
- υ, U, the Italian *u* in *virtù*, the vowel sound in *truth*, but generally denoted in English by *oo*, as *sōōth*, *sōōthe*.
- υ, Y, a sound unknown in English ; but common in French, as in *malheur*, *clôtüre*, and familiar to the Scottish ear.
- h, H, the *spiritus asper* of the Greek, as *δunπος*, Homer.

\* The words *hemlok*, or *plethorik*, may serve to exemplify this natural sequence of the consonants ; in the former, *m*, *l*, *k*, successively labial, linguo-palatal, guttural ; in the latter, *p*, lip sound, *l*, *th*, *r*, tip-o'th'tongue sounds, *k*, throat sound.

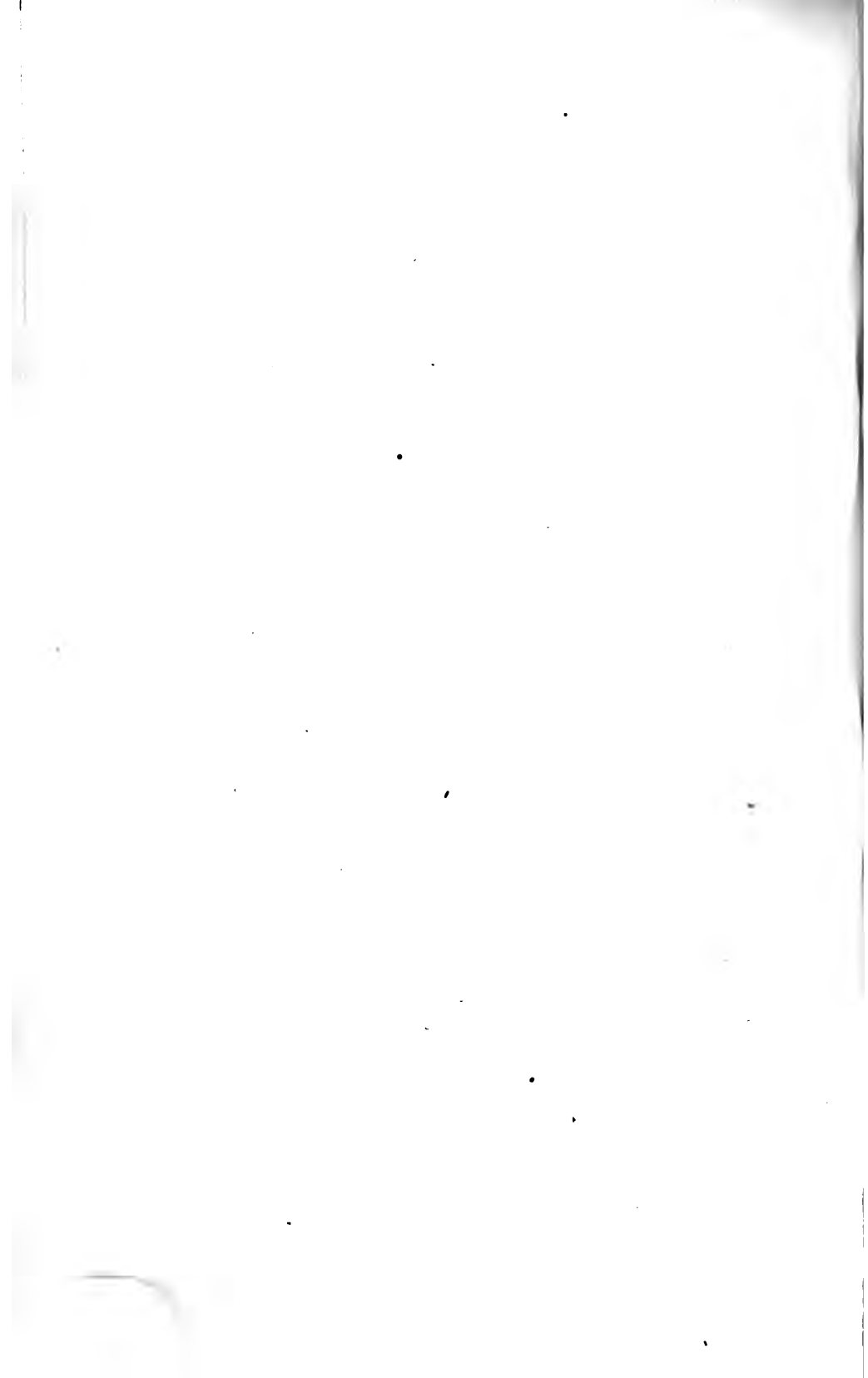
CONSONANTS.

Lip sounds.	{	p, P, labial <i>mute</i> .
		b, B, do. <i>grave</i> .
Tip of the tongue sounds.	{	f, F, do. <i>aspirate</i> of p.
		v, V, do. <i>aspirate</i> of b.
		m, M, do. <i>nasalized</i> .
		t, T, linguo-palatal <i>mute</i> .
		d, D, do. <i>grave</i> .
		θ, Θ, do. <i>aspirate</i> of t.
		ð, Ð, do. <i>aspirate</i> of d.
		n, N, do. <i>nasalized</i> .
		l, L, do. } <i>liquids</i> .
		r, R, do. }
Throat sounds.	{	s, S, do. } <i>sibilants</i> .
		z, Z, do. }
		ש, the Hebrew character for the simple sound <i>sh</i> .
		j, J, the French character for <i>zh</i> , as in <i>j'ai</i> .
		k, K, guttural <i>mute</i> .
		g, G, do. <i>grave</i> .
	{	χ, X, do. <i>aspirate</i> of k.
		घ, Sanscrit character for <i>gh</i> , the <i>aspirate</i> of g hard.
		ङ, Sanscrit character for <i>ng</i> , the guttural <i>nasalized</i> .†

† The English sound of this guttural, as in *hang*, is different from the nasal sound of the French *an*, inasmuch as the latter expires in the nose, without any application of the root of the tongue to the palate. Hence it is that Restaut, a high authority in French grammar, includes *an*, with its correlatives *in*, *on*, *un*, in his enumeration of vowel sounds. I have not been able to find a simple character for this sound, either in its French or English phasis.



THREE LECTURES  
ON THE PROPER  
OBJECTS AND METHODS OF EDUCATION  
IN REFERENCE TO THE  
DIFFERENT ORDERS OF SOCIETY;  
AND  
ON THE RELATIVE UTILITY OF  
CLASSICAL INSTRUCTION.  
DELIVERED IN THE HUMANITY CLASS-ROOM, NOVEMBER 1835.



## LECTURE FIRST.

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DELIVERED MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2. 1835.

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ON THE EDUCATION REQUIRED FOR THE MANY, CONTRASTED  
WITH THE TRAINING REQUIRED FOR THE FEW.

THE idea of giving school education to the entire people of a country, is altogether of modern, and, comparatively indeed, of very recent origin. In times when the majority of the population were slaves, and belonged as transferable property to masters or dealers, such a notion could have scarcely presented itself even to the Utopian visions of the most romantic philanthropist. In all that Cicero, Quintilian, and Plutarch have written about the training of youth, they contemplate, as the subjects of it, none but the children of free parents in easy and even affluent circumstances. And though domestic slavery disappeared in the new order of things which arose out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, yet the bulk of the people were still regarded as little better than beasts of burden, whose condition might then be considered as having reached the highest point of attainable happiness, when their bellies were well filled, and their backs not overloaded. There was, no doubt, an implied recognition of the moral and intellectual nature of all men, in the professions and ceremonies of religious belief; but these were directed, in their practical application, rather to inculcate a blind, unchallenging submission to the authorities in Church and State, than to enlighten the minds and increase the knowledge of the people. Even so late as the last age,

Voltaire, the great champion of innovation, declares it to be necessary that there should be ignorant poor in society. "It is not," says he, "the labourer or operative that is a fit subject for education, but the comfortable burgher,—the easy citizen. Those who live by the labour of their hands, have no time to cultivate their minds; it is enough for them to follow the lead of their betters."

More recently, it has been the policy of free governments to permit, and even encourage, the diffusion of knowledge; but, for the States of Germany was reserved the glory of establishing it as a first principle of political morality, that every Government is bound to take care that the whole body of the people shall be educated. According to this article of their political creed, the supreme power of a state, by the act of assuming authority and control, comes under a sacred obligation to provide the means of having all the subjects of its rule trained to good moral habits, and to as large a measure of useful and entertaining knowledge, as the condition every one is born to will allow him time to acquire.

This truly noble and generous principle flows naturally from the Christian injunction, of doing unto others as we would that they should do unto us. It is in truth the political expression of that divine maxim; and it requires no gift of prophecy to foretell, that in proportion as civilization and Christianity advance hand in hand, it will influence more and more extensively the policy of nations. To Prussia, perhaps, belongs the honour of having carried the principle most effectively into practice. It has been her good fortune, at least, to have that part of her policy most fully explained and widely promulgated over Europe; for it has been proved beyond the possibility of doubt or contradiction, that out of a population of twelve millions, to speak in round numbers, two millions, constituting the sum-total of children of an age to frequent school, (which is reckoned from 7 to 14,) were actually in attendance in 1831; in other words, that one in every six of the whole population was at school.

This proportion of school-going population places Prussia



far above the educational condition of our own much boasted country of Scotland, where it seldom exceeds, and very often falls short of, a tithe of the whole population ; and in which it is still to be lamented, that a large amount of the inhabitants of the Highlands receive no regular education at all. The contrast between Prussia and England is still more humiliating to the latter. It is singular enough that, while the two other integral parts of the British Empire enjoy the benefits of a legislative provision for the instruction of the people, England, which would seem to have the prior claim, should still be without one. No attempt has ever been seriously made in that country to unite all the children of the poor in one common education ; and hence it is, that in spite of the unexampled exertions of private benevolence among our southern neighbours, the great mass of the lower ranks south of the Trent are still among the least and worst educated populations in Europe.

The admirable results of the Prussian system have been obtained by a long course of prudent and pains-taking legislation, founded upon the great principle, that Government is responsible for the right education of the people ; and this principle the Prussian lawgiver has followed out to its legitimate consequence, by making it incumbent on parents either to send their children to school, or to give security that means are taken to educate them elsewhere.

It is the fashion in this country, to reprobate this ‘ compulsory system,’—‘ this odious Prussian drill ;’ and to denounce it as a vexatious interference with parental rights, characteristic of a military despotism, and intolerable to the spirit of a freeborn Briton. But it is surely a mistake to confound the Prussian regulation with the long-exploded practice of passing sumptuary laws, and imposing restraints on the free and harmless exercise either of the physical, the moral, or the intellectual powers. No man of common sense contends, either in Prussia or elsewhere, that Government should interfere directly with the character or conduct of adults, as long as they refrain from trespassing on the rights and privileges of their

fellow-creatures. A good Government is contented, as far as regards the individual, with guaranteeing to him that best description of civil liberty,—security from wrong. The life and conversation of every person arrived at the years of discretion, are matters that rest between God and his own conscience. But in like manner as the Lord Chancellor, who is the head of the law, has his wards in chancery, and has been known to rescue the child from the custody of a wicked parent; so the law itself, and the Government that administers it, may reasonably claim the right to come so far *in locum parentis* as to save the child, before it is yet a free agent, from being utterly abandoned to vicious habits. In return for the protection which the State affords the parent in the enjoyment of his individual liberty, it is entitled, as guardian of the public interests, to secure itself against such abuse of that liberty as is likely to endanger the life and property of others, who are equally under the safeguard of the laws. As long as the child is a dependent and irresponsible being, the public has an interest, a sort of property in him, as well as the parents. A man may plead his civil right to have a nest of vipers in his house, or to rear a brood of young tigers; but the police is at least entitled to take precautions that he shall not let them loose upon the neighbourhood. On the same principle that a man is compelled to muzzle a ferocious dog, it seems but fair to insist upon precautions being taken that his children shall not become a public nuisance.

I would not be supposed, however, to affirm, that, in a country like Great Britain, it is advisable or practicable for Government to proceed in an absolute and summary way, in enforcing all at once this natural right of security and self-defence,—or, to speak more properly, in taking upon itself the discharge of this great duty: but it cannot be thought unreasonable to doubt the propriety, as well as the humanity, of arming the law with the tremendous power of punishing crimes, to the extent of banishment, imprisonment, and even death, while the more god-like prerogative of preventing crime, by taking away the temptation to commit it, is withheld.

The truth is, that all the pictures which have been drawn of Prussian children torn from the arms of their reluctant parents, and marched to school by beat of drum, are purely imaginary. The compulsory provision exists no doubt on the Prussian statute-book, but the law operates indirectly, by making it imperative to produce certificates of school education, not merely at the threshold of the liberal professions, but before being apprenticed to the meanest employment or craft of the labourer or artizan. And the regulation being in itself agreeable to reason, the practice it enjoins has grown into a habit among the people of Prussia. So cordially indeed do they enter into the *spirit* of the law, that they go even beyond the strict *letter* of its injunctions. For example, the law says, that every child shall be at school from and after the age of seven years complete; but it has become a common practice to anticipate this period, and to send children as early as five, and even earlier, since the institution of infant schools.

France has already profited by the example of Prussia. A few years ago, with a forgetfulness of former injuries worthy of all praise and imitation, she sent to the country which had but recently been her deadliest enemy, a peaceful mission, requesting to be instructed in the art of educating her youth. And if anything can enhance the glory of this conquest over herself, it is the earnestness, the perseverance, and the truly philosophical spirit with which, under the guidance of her enlightened Minister of Public Instruction,\* France is now reducing to practice the lessons she then received.

In our own island, there is a movement in the public mind on the subject of popular education, which bids fair to lead ere long to a similar, perhaps even to a still happier result. The question of a National Education for the English people, is one that must now rise in importance every succeeding year. Parliament; when it bestowed the elective franchise on so large a portion of the people, came virtually under a pledge to make them more and more worthy of the new privilege, by

\* M. Guizot.

improving their moral and intellectual condition. The obstacles in the way to a final settlement of the great question, how the whole body of the English people shall be comprehended in one general system of sound and wholesome instruction, are no doubt formidable, and will unavoidably postpone it for many a day; but it can scarcely be deemed extravagant to expect, that, out of the free institutions of this country, under the influence of that unquenchable energy, practical wisdom, and indomitable spirit of enterprise, which have kept Great Britain so long at the head of European civilization and improvement, there will at last emerge, sanctioned and partially endowed by the State, a system of instruction for the people of England, superior alike to the Prussian and to the French.

In witnessing and examining, on the spot, the practical working of both these systems, it is impossible not to admire the spirit that animates the two governments, and the arrangement of all the administrative part of public instruction; but there are defects and imperfections in the actual practice of teaching in Prussia and France, which we may hope to see avoided in any system of National Education that shall be established under the sanction of a British legislature. To give an example or two. All over Germany a prejudice is entertained, almost as universal as I hold it to be groundless, against any modification of the monitorial method of teaching. The nearest approach to it is, the employing of those who are pupils in the Seminaries for Teachers, to act the part of under masters in the primary schools, which are usually attached to those establishments; but there prevails, not among the people only, but among the educated and enlightened men of that country, a rooted aversion to the employment of one pupil to teach another. Hence the multiplication of masters is their idea of a perfect school. The larger the proportion of masters to the number of scholars, the better the system is conceived to be; and hence a rate of expenditure for the purposes of education, far beyond what can ever be looked for in Great Britain. Nor is the pecuniary objection the only one; for if

this were a fit occasion, it would not be difficult to prove, that there is a quickening and improving energy in the monitorial method when it is skilfully applied, which no amount of masters nor increase of expenditure can adequately supply ; that it brings into play principles,—left dormant under the teaching even of good masters,—which act most beneficially both on the monitor and his section of pupils, in promoting their progress and preparing them for the business of life ; and that if this beneficial tendency has been but rarely exemplified, it is only another proof among many, how little advance can be made in the improvement of education, without the means of training masters to the knowledge and exercise of their profession.

In France the same prejudice against monitorial teaching does not prevail as in Germany, and great exertions have been made, with the countenance and aid of the government, to encourage and extend it. But, though there can be no doubt that the use of monitors has infused a spirit of alertness and activity into the French *écoles primaires*, which one feels the want of in the *volks-schulen* of Germany, yet the monitorial method is far from having attained in France its full development and efficiency. This is owing, in a great measure, to the notion which has gained ground even among schoolmasters over that country, that boys can be trusted with the teaching of nothing beyond the mechanical processes of reading, spelling, and cyphering. Of this opinion we have long had many practical refutations in schools established among ourselves, where much intellectual and even moral training is accomplished by means of monitors ; and these schools, we may confidently anticipate, will serve as models in the preparation of any great legislative measure for the education of the English people.

Another and more incurable imperfection of popular education in France, is the necessity, as it is thought to be, of inculcating upon children at school in the religious part of early instruction, all the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic faith, in their most unmitigated form,—tenets which they can

scarcely be expected to hold when they grow up to manhood, or, to say the least, which a vast majority of the living adults have long since discarded from their creed. And thus society in France is placed in the false and alarming position, that the youth, of the present generation at least, are taught to believe and reverence what their parents treat with scorn and derision. In Britain, on the contrary, we have the incalculable advantage of imbuing our children with a system of religious belief, which not only comes purer from the fountains of truth, but which is, with exceptions and shades of difference not worth taking into this account, in accordance with the convictions as well as the professions of the whole population.

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BUT while the public mind in Great Britain is awakening to the important and difficult question, what is, and what ought to be, the education of the working classes, and results are preparing, which, after much altercation and considerable delay, will be collected at last, we venture to hope, into a wise and practicable measure ;—the question, ‘What is, and what ought to be, the youthful training of the higher and wealthier orders of society?’ has not escaped the spirit of inquiry that is abroad.

It is to the consideration of this point that I mean to confine myself, in the observations I have to offer in this and the two following Lectures.

It would be difficult to form too high an estimate of the public interests involved in the questions which such an inquiry opens up. For, though the number of persons subjected to this higher species of discipline be comparatively limited, yet in that small part of the whole mass of the population are contained the surest hopes of the nation,—the true aristocracy of every civilized community. It is the fund upon which the country must draw for its legislators, its divines, its public teachers, its physicians, its gentry, its nobility. They constitute that least numerous but most influential class

of persons, who impress their character on the age they live in, of whom what is called good society is composed, and on whom the community at large depends both for embellishment and for impulse.

It is manifest, that if there be any thing materially amiss in the system of education in which the youth of this class are reared, the evil consequences will not be at all in the small proportion of the numbers. For unless the root of the evil, if evil should be found to exist, be extirpated,—unless the higher instruction be in unison with the spirit of the age, and move forward with the same accelerated pace as the lower,—unless, indeed, it keep always a-head, and that too, not in particular points only, but along the whole line,—there is reason to fear, that the more diffused and the more rational the education of the people shall become, the greater will be the risk to the State of inconvenience and convulsion. An enlightened and well-informed population could scarcely be expected to go on smoothly or cordially, with an aristocracy at their head who should have nothing to plume themselves upon but high birth and large possessions. If it should be found that the early culture of this class had been either so imperfect or so misdirected, that while one portion of it was imbued with an inveterate and unnatural aversion to study and to all purely intellectual occupations, the other was employed almost exclusively in exercises of mind remote from the business and uses of ordinary life,—we could not too soon take the alarm, and look out for the remedy. It is no doubt greatly to be desired, that the more elegant and recondite parts of learning and science, should be acquired by those whose circumstances enable them to set apart much time for mental cultivation; but such acquirement must be in addition to, not to the exclusion of, those branches of knowledge of which a good system of National Education is sure to impart a certain measure to the people at large. Of these the higher ranks should possess a still greater mastery, if they wish to obtain credit for whatever else they may know besides.

If there is any chance of the frame-work of society being

strained or disjointed in consequence of the progress of popular instruction, it is not from the diffusion of knowledge that the danger is to be apprehended, but from the higher ranks being left behind in the race of improvement. And this danger they must ward off, not by supercilious looks and distant demeanour, still less by the follies and extravagancies of selfish indulgence, or by wasteful and profligate expenditure which the very retainers who profit by it have learned to despise them for; but by making good their claim to that superiority of intellect and acquirement, which their command of time and opportunity brings so readily and invitingly within their reach. When superior knowledge is still farther recommended and enhanced in value by that ease of manner and gracefulness of deportment which are the visible expression of refined taste, benevolent feeling, conscious integrity, unblemished honour, and varied accomplishment; it is then that a charm is thrown over the character and outward bearing, which, more than any thing else, captivates and subdues the great mass of mankind, to whom their physical condition must for ever render such grace and acquirement unattainable.

It is the influence of this combination of birth, station, and personal character, that has been every where acknowledged as of such salutary efficacy in directing the movements and moderating the excitements of the other orders of society :—

— magno in populo quum saepe coorta est  
Seditio, saevitque animis ignobile vulgus :  
Tum, pietate gravem ac meritis si forte virum quem  
Conspexere, silent, arrectisque auribus adstant :  
Iste regit dictis animos, et pectora mulcet.

An apprehension has been entertained, and of late not unfrequently expressed, in looking forward to the future history of Britain, that this salutary influence will ere long cease to affect her population. But its foundations lie too deep in the nature of man, and of the British nation in particular, to leave any good ground for such apprehension. It must not however be forgotten, that the weight of character, which the poet makes so effectual in swaying the minds of the populace, is to be ac-



quired by arts very different from those which have long been too much in favour with our youthful aristocracy. Hunting and horse-racing, drinking and driving, grouse-shooting and gambling, are all, save the last, innocent enough in their way, if taken in moderation as an occasional pastime, but ruinous to the interests of the individual, and of his order, when pursued as a serious and engrossing occupation.

In proceeding to speak of the education required for the higher classes, as distinguished from that which it is proposed to bring within the reach of all, it will be proper in the outset to consider well, wherein the distinction consists between these two kinds of instruction,—that which befits the great mass of the working population, and that which is best adapted for the few. This it is the more necessary to do, as much of the plausible speculation which has misled the public mind, is indebted for its effect to the wilful or ignorant confounding of this very obvious distinction.

It is now-a-days almost universally admitted, that there is an early training, moral and intellectual, which it is desirable to secure to the great body of the people, whether agricultural or manufacturing. Now, it is abundantly obvious, that the object to be kept in view in such early tuition is, to take advantage of the brief period of docility which intervenes between the age of helpless infancy and that period of life when the sinews are sufficiently knit for hard and continuous labour, and when the profit of the child's handiwork becomes available for the support of the parent, or for its own. This interval, so precious because so brief, amounts often, in large manufacturing towns, to not more than a single twelvemonth, and almost everywhere it is a period of lax and irregular attendance; and yet it is all the time that can be depended upon for training the children of the working classes to such habits, tastes, and feelings, as may render them honest, industrious, intelligent, and happy. This end, it is equally clear, will have the best chance of being attained in their case, by presenting knowledge in an easy and attractive form; by investing school with pleasant associations and endearing re-

collections ; by imparting, in short, not merely the ability to read, but the love of reading and the desire of instruction, so as to furnish the means of filling up, usefully and agreeably, the short respites from toil that occur in the poor man's life.

As means to this end, one can scarcely overrate the importance of Infant Schools. They extend the brief and precious interval just spoken of, by the addition of a still earlier and more susceptible age, during which habits may be formed which will far more than double the benefit to be derived from the later portion of the child's disposable time. And when that still more important improvement shall be introduced, of having public accredited means of training schoolmasters to the skilful discharge of their professional duties,—an improvement not altogether so distant and hopeless as it once appeared,—it is not easy to set limits to the progress that may then be made, in forming virtuous habits and spreading useful information among the great body of the labouring and manufacturing population.

A very different treatment, however, is required, and with higher objects in view, for the classes of society whom birth, or fortune, or extraordinary talent, exempt from manual labour and drudgery, and who are to earn their livelihood, and improve or adorn their condition, by the feats of the head rather than by the labour of the hand. The studies of this class of youth are extended over a much longer period than those of the labouring population. Time is allowed for following out a systematic course of training, through various stages of progress, and for a series of years ; and it is a training as distinct in its nature as it is different in its aim. For while nothing is to be omitted, in the longer training more than in the shorter, that tends to form virtuous habits, and inspire the love of knowledge and of nature, there is wanted, for the higher class of youth, a method comprehensive rather than compendious. It must be a course of intellectual discipline, directed, not to stock the mind with ready prepared information, but to bring out in orderly and healthful succession the several mental faculties, to give to each its appropriate nou-

ishment and invigorating exercise, and to teach the possessor the free and dextrous use of them all; that when the time comes for sending him forth into the arduous competition and conflict of human affairs, he may be able to find a way for himself, or to make one. In this case, the point to be aimed at is not a great store of knowledge of which the mind is little better than the passive recipient. The legitimate object of the higher education, is to provide the means of evolving and perfecting the various powers and capacities of man's nature, so as to enable him, in the words of Milton, 'to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war.'

The object of popular education, as far as the labouring classes and their children are concerned, is to create an appetite for knowledge, and a love of reading, and thus to furnish them with such harmless and improving means of mental occupation and amusement, as may save them from brutalizing pursuits, and fence them against the seduction of low and sensual indulgences.

For that considerable portion of town population whose daily occupations are of a kind that involve mathematical or chemical principles, it is desirable that a somewhat higher species of instruction should be provided; and when that instruction is followed out through a consecutive course of two or three years, as is done in the School of Arts of this city, it can scarcely fail to be attended with the best effects, both on the happiness of the individual, and on the progress of the arts and manufactures of the country.

It is an extension of this view of instruction for the people,—and one peculiarly well adapted for, and only practicable indeed in large towns,—when short courses of public lectures, on various branches of knowledge, are addressed to grown up persons of both sexes belonging to the middle and higher classes of citizens, who have either not had the benefits of regular education, or are desirous to renew long-forgotten impressions. Such popular views of the great truths and discoveries of science and of art, if judiciously given and made suf-

ficiently elementary, form an agreeable and innocent recreation for uneducated or ill educated adults. They have a tendency, no doubt, to fill the minds of this class of hearers with crude and innaccurate notions, to generate conceit and ridiculous pretensions, and to engage them in discussing what they do not and cannot comprehend. Nevertheless, all these drawbacks will not prevent them from elevating, in the long run, the character of our city and suburban population; and, in the mean time, they are excellent substitutes for talking scandal, or wrangling on politics.

But in a liberal education, the question is not, how we shall turn to best account a very limited time, or remedy the want of early instruction, or fill up most agreeably an idle hour. It is, by what means we shall best secure the general and, up to a certain point, equable cultivation of the intellectual powers, —they being considered as the instruments by means of which the greatest good is to be effected, both for the individual himself, and for the community of which he is a member.

Obvious as the distinction is which I have now stated, and clearly as it points to a different mode of treatment in the two cases, very little attention has been paid to it in practice; and out of the confused ideas that prevail on the subject, serious errors have sprung in opposite directions.

On the one hand, many of the attempts to enlighten the adults of the labouring classes, both orally and by the press, are of a cast much too abstruse and scientific; for it is vain to expect that any considerable number of persons engaged twelve or fourteen hours a-day in manual labour, are to persevere in following long demonstrations, or to grapple successfully with the abstractions of mathematical truth. And with regard to the young, we are doomed too frequently to witness very preposterous attempts to initiate mere infants into the mysteries of chemistry and astronomy, at an age when they should scarcely be troubled with the alphabet.

On the other hand, a mistake of a different kind has been of late still more prevalent,—that of overlaying the mind of the young aspirant to a liberal profession with the facts ascer-

tained and the results arrived at by learned and scientific research, while he is left unacquainted with the steps and processes of the proof. We hear it triumphantly stated as evidence of the 'march of intellect,' that the truths,—which it took several ages to pave the way for and the unceasing labour of a whole lifetime for men of transcendent genius finally to establish and demonstrate,—may now be communicated in a single hour's lecture ; and this statement is repeated and exemplified, till the poor youth begins to fancy himself another Newton. He is whirled aloft, so to speak, and set down without any exertion of his own upon an eminence, whence he catches a dim and distant view of the regions of science, instead of being led step by step to explore them singly and in succession. In this kind of pastime (for it would be an abuse of terms to call it liberal education) all time is looked upon as lost that is not employed in filling the pupil's memory with scraps of what is called *useful*, but in truth is only *entertaining*, knowledge ; a process of cramming, which flatters the indolence and vanity of youth, but from which no wholesome digestion or assimilation can be expected to accrue. The youth opens his ears to instruction, so long as it amuses ; he must be bribed high with some immediate gratification to a languid curiosity. He will consent to make the circuit of all the sciences, provided it is to be a voyage of pleasure. But,

It was not by *such* loitering and ease,  
 That Greece obtained the brighter palm of art ;  
 That soft, yet ardent Athens learned to please,  
 To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart :  
 In all supreme, complete in every part !  
 It was not thence majestic Rome arose,  
 And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart :  
 For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows ;  
 Renown is not the child of indolent repose.

Give me the youth who enjoys a satisfaction—altogether independent of immediate reward or prospective advantage—in following out the steps of a long demonstration, or in tracing the involutions and conquering the difficulties of a classi-

cal author. The sound and healthy condition of the mental faculties is when the student can take for his motto, *labor ipse voluptas*; not that state of repletion and satiety when the maxim is reversed, and the pleasure itself becomes a weariness. The difference is like that between the lazy unwieldiness of the glutton, and the vigorous frame of him who delights to climb the steep mountain, with no other motive to urge him but the pleasure of the exercise.

This life of ours, to be worth living at all, must be mainly filled up with the details of dry and difficult duties, either self-imposed, or laid upon us by stern necessity; and to the performance of these the youth must advance with their intellectual powers disciplined to strenuous and well-directed activity, not with a chaos of ill-assorted facts in their memory. Excursions to the flowery fields of natural history and elementary physics can be but occasional interludes—and the less frequent the more relished—in the serious business of a world like this. Happy they, whom judicious training, and the well-regulated habit of early exertion, have enabled to place their chief happiness, not in the finished performance only, but in the actual discharge, of laborious duties! To this number those have but little chance of belonging, who, having been lured on in the path of knowledge by honeyed sops, can read and listen only so long as they are amused.

The excessive anxiety which is at present manifested to make the discoveries and conclusions of modern science level to the comprehension of the young and ignorant has no doubt arisen in a great measure from the prevailing conviction of the propriety of universal education, and the necessity, with that view, of husbanding time, and taking short-hand ways to knowledge; but it would be absurd to recommend, and preach up as the best, a system of early tuition, of which the most that can be said is, that it is better than none at all.

While no means are neglected of awakening a youth's attention to the wonders of creation and the phenomena of the material world, his ambition should, at the same time, be roused to know and to weigh the evidence on which the con-

clusions of science are founded. He should not be tempted to take all upon trust, on the *ipse dixit* of a lecturer, but should be put through such a course of mental gymnastics, as might enable him to climb the tree and gather the ripe fruit for himself, rather than have it tossed into his lap in an indigestible state by another. The superficial system indeed, applied to the class of youth we are speaking of, does little more than minister to a vain and idle curiosity. It may create and gratify a sickly, feverish craving for amusing information and anecdote, but it indisposes—goes far indeed to disqualify—for those severer exercises of the faculties, which alone can produce the finer specimens of the animal endowed with reason and speech, or fit him even for grappling with the ordinary duties and difficulties of life. It is vain to expect that a youth who has gone through this process of pampering and spoon-feeding should buckle to the dry details of a law office or a counting-house, without, at least, passing through a long apprenticeship of misery.

In every case, therefore, where education proposes to itself a higher aim than to mitigate the deteriorating influence of incessant toil, it is the gradual development of the faculties, and their simultaneous training to healthful and vigorous exercise, that ought to constitute its main design, and not the mere accumulation of facts in the memory, and the devising of easy and compendious ways to the truths and conclusions of science.

The important problem, then, to be solved is, What are the best means of applying that intellectual discipline which is justly regarded as indispensable to any education that deserves the name of liberal? In other words, how are we to insure that preparation of the youthful faculties, which, without being strictly professional, ought to be required as a common preliminary to all the liberal professions, and to all the conditions of life which are independent of any profession?

In entering upon this question to-morrow, I shall consider whether the Mathematical method be better entitled than the Empirical to supersede or take precedence of the Classical;

and after weighing the relative importance of Mathematics and Classics in a scheme of liberal education, I shall be led to advert to the great schools of England, where the balance between the two has not hitherto been skilfully or impartially adjusted, and to compare them in this respect with the corresponding institutions of our own City.

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## LECTURE SECOND.

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DELIVERED TUESDAY, 3<sup>d</sup> NOVEMBER 1835.

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### ON THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF MATHEMATICS AND CLASSICS IN THE HIGHER INSTRUCTION.

WITH the view of solving the problem proposed at the close of yesterday's Lecture, various plans have been proposed and acted upon, but they may be all reduced under the two heads of Mathematical and Classical; for after what has been said, we may fairly discount the Empirical method, which deals in conclusions without premises, and is content to give a top-dressing of facts, as it were, without either extirpating the weeds or ploughing the soil. Neither is there any necessity for considering the Classical and Mathematical training as opposed to, or exclusive of, each other. On the contrary, both have hitherto been generally admitted as desirable, though with wide differences of opinion as to the rank and importance they respectively ought to hold in the business of the higher education.

The tendency in most of our great public institutions has been all along very decidedly in favour of the Classics—in many to the neglect, almost to the exclusion, of every thing else; and this undue preponderance has doubtless contributed not a little to that re-action which now threatens to hurry us as far in the opposite direction, and to banish ancient literature altogether from the curriculum of juvenile study. Not only does it seem to be the wish of many, that the Classical

method should be superseded by that which we have described as flattering sloth and cherishing a love of vulgar display, but there appears to be a hesitation in the minds of the intelligent public, and even among many who retain their reverence for classical instruction, whether it should not be thrust down to a subordinate place, and mathematics be enthroned as the leading branch in its stead. As the party who favour this change of dynasty have made common cause with the empirics, and both are employed in warring against the supremacy of the classics, it may not be amiss to resume the argument, trite though it be, under the somewhat novel aspect and circumstances of the times we live in,—when the minds of men, set free from what remained of mental and political thralldom, are but too apt to run off towards the other extreme, and in their inordinate love of what is new, to abate their respect for what is good in the old.

In expressing my own firm conviction, that a serious and irreparable evil would accrue to the higher education of the country, if the classics were driven from the vantage-ground they have hitherto occupied by any system of training, were it ever so perfect, of a purely physical or mathematical kind, it is the farthest thing from my intention to depreciate mathematics as a means of disciplining the youthful mind, however much I may think that its importance in this respect has been often overrated. The study of the mathematics is useful, in the first place, as a means of confirming and improving a habit of steady and continued attention. It cannot be said to create it; for where the power of attention does not already exist in a certain degree, it will generally be found impossible to engage the mind in mathematical study at all. In the next place, a certain amount of mathematical acquirement, all the world are agreed, is indispensable as a passport to such acquaintance with the powers, properties, and phenomena of the material universe, as it is desirable that every man of liberal education should possess. But both these uses can be fully secured, by employing mathematics as an adjunct and auxiliary, without making it the leading part of the education of a

gentleman. To give it the chief place, would expose to a double risk. There would be, on the one hand, the danger of foundering altogether in the case of minds which, though not destitute of ability, cannot be brought to understand or to relish the peculiar language and ideas with which the science is conversant. On the other hand, there would be a risk, in the case of minds of great aptitude for the study, of all their time and all their faculties being absorbed in a pursuit which withdraws its votaries into a region of its own, and incapacitates for the ordinary business and duties of life.

It is a great mistake to suppose that the mere mathematician, from being accustomed to the long and beautiful deductions of his favourite science, is a better reasoner and less liable to error than other men, in all matters that lie beyond the mathematical pale. On the contrary, it is notorious, that the more profound he is in his own science and the more devoted to it, the less is he fitted for the investigation of truth in every other direction, and the more liable to be imposed upon by false reasoning and led astray by specious views, in the commerce and intercourse of the world. For, as Dugald Stewart observes,—and that beautiful writer on metaphysics and morals was himself an able mathematician,—“it unfortunately happens, that while mathematical studies exercise the faculty of reasoning or deduction, they give no employment to the other powers of the understanding concerned in the investigation of truth. On the contrary, they are apt to produce a facility in the admission of data, and a circumscription of the field of speculation, by partial and arbitrary definitions.”\*

I have already said enough to guard myself against the suspicion, that in vindicating, as I shall attempt to do, the just claims of classical tuition, I undertake the defence of the system of instruction which has been hitherto pursued in most of the great seminaries of our country. The education of our ingenuous youth, I am willing to allow, has been too exclusively

\* Elements, vol. III. p. 271, 4th edition.

classical, and the classical instruction itself has rarely been conducted on the most approved and enlightened principles. The cause of sound and wholesome education loses nothing by this concession. The temporary popularity of anti-classical opinions is owing to nothing inherent in the study itself, but to abuses and imperfections in the mode of conducting it; and these it behoves the advocate of the classics, instead of defending, to expose, in order that, while he stands up for the principle of classical discipline, he may not be made responsible for errors in the practice.

This will be my apology for adverting shortly to these practical errors,—which in truth form the whole case and argument against us,—whether they be found to prevail on the other side of the Tweed or on this. We shall begin with the former.

In the great schools of England,—Eton, Westminster, Winchester, and Harrow,—where the majority of English youth who receive a liberal and high professional education are brought up, the course of instruction has for ages been confined so exclusively to Greek and Latin, that most of the pupils quit them, not only ignorant of, but with a considerable disrelish and contempt for, every branch of literary and scientific acquirement, except the dead languages. It may be said that there are, in the immediate neighbourhood of the College, teachers of mathematics, writing, French, and other accomplishments, to whom parents have the option of sending their sons. But as these masters are extra-scholastic,—mere appendages, not integral parts of the establishment,—and as neither they nor the branches of knowledge they profess to teach are recognised in the scheme of school business, it requires but little acquaintance with the nature of boys to be aware, that the disrespect in which teachers so situated are uniformly held, extends, in young minds, to the subjects taught, and is apt to create a rooted dislike to a kind of instruction which they look upon as a work of supererogation. And this, we venture to say, is all but the universal feeling at Eton.

In this general neglect of all knowledge but classical, it would be some consolation to be assured that Greek and Latin,

at least, were acquired ;—although it cannot be denied, that the most perfect mastery of those tongues would be but a poor return for a term of service comprehending (if the pupil go through all the gradations of Eton school,) ten of the most docile and valuable years of human life. But it will scarcely be pretended that any such security exists. The grammars, and other initiatory books, are so unphilosophical and repulsive,—the methods of instruction so technical and uninviting,—and the temptations to idleness and dissipation so numerous among youths removed from the eyes of parents and friends, that we need not be surprised to find a result which has furnished plausible grounds for many an attack on classical discipline. The result may be stated thus :—A few quit the great schools of England with scholar-like acquirements ; a greater number, without being much of scholars, shew a refined taste for the niceties and elegancies of Greek and Latin poetry ; but a majority, we will not venture to say how great, leave school with a slender enough stock of classical attainments and no disposition to increase it, and in a state of ignorance of every other department of science and literature, foreign or domestic, which would be ludicrous if it were not lamentable, in the case of young men to whom, from their station in society, independently in a great measure of their talents or acquirements, the destinies of this great country are likely to be committed.

This system, so narrow and exclusive in the end proposed, and pursuing that end by methods imperfect and antiquated, is acted upon till within three or four years of the age when young men are qualified by law to be their own masters, and to take their seats in the Legislature of the country.

It is not my business at present to consider what the chances are, at the English universities or elsewhere, of the obvious tendencies of such school-discipline being either counteracted or confirmed. Much is no doubt done to remedy its deficiencies, both before and after quitting school, by the few who are gifted with the *mens divinator* ; but it cannot be right to peril the safety of the commonwealth on such rare accidents, or to appeal to them as they occur at intervals few and far between,

in defence of a system which reason, and common sense, and experience, alike condemn.

Great men educate themselves, and become so, not by the discipline of the great schools, but in spite of it. The virtue of any system of school training is shewn, not in exhibiting a few splendid samples, whose very rarity proves that it is not to the system we owe them, but in the large proportion of the whole number of pupils whom it sends forth with a stock of acquirement in various branches of useful and elegant knowledge, differing no doubt in each individual according to his tastes and capacity, but respectable in all; and it is especially shewn in imbuing them with a love of study, and forming habits of application. If tried by either test, the English schools will be found defective. I have no wish to deny, but am rather proud to avow my belief, that these venerable establishments, almost coeval with the constitution and monarchy of England, have, with all their faults, had a large share in creating and preserving some of the best qualities in the character of an English gentleman; nor is it difficult to trace their influence, for good as well as for evil, in impressing its peculiar character on the British Parliament, and particularly on the House of Commons. They have helped to infuse into it that mixture of common sense and right feeling, of manly and generous sentiment, of taste and good breeding without pretension or affectation, and that union of boldness in public harangue with courtesy in private intercourse, which have long distinguished the House of Commons, as much as the extent of its power, or the freedom and eloquence of its debates.

It can scarcely, on the other hand, be denied, that the limited range to which the preliminary instruction of the majority of its members is confined, has seriously affected its usefulness as a deliberative and legislative assembly. Many, even of its noblest speakers and brightest ornaments, have been lamentably deficient in science and philosophy, and particularly in that which so becomes a statesman,—the science of political economy. They were adjusting choric metres, when

they ought to have been studying Adam Smith ; and, with regard to the great bulk of the Members, their restlessness and impatience under the infliction of any speech, however transcendent in talent, which deals in subtle argument or in general principles, are melancholy proofs of a narrow and imperfect education. There have been, and now are, among our representatives, men of the most enlightened views, combined with extensive practical experience, and capable of giving those views the full advantage of clear and eloquent exposition, who condemn themselves to silence, and listen to nonsense without refuting it, rather than encounter unreasonable prejudices, or force themselves on the unwilling ear of the House. Ricardo is the only instance of a man, not in office, who was patiently listened to, I dare not say fully understood, by that Assembly, while he expounded and applied the great principles of political economy ; and it was only by long perseverance and imperturbable temper, that he vindicated that privilege for himself. For many a day, his rising to speak was the signal for a buzz of small talk in little coteries, or a general rush to the door.

The truth is, the system of discipline in the endowed schools of England, which are chiefly to blame for all this, is essentially monastic. They were established centuries ago, when the clergy had all the learning there was, and they were intended chiefly, if not solely, as a means of recruiting the different sections of the ecclesiastical profession. And as scarcely any perceptible change has taken place in the school practice since its first institution, it is almost unnecessary to add, that it has long outlived the circumstances and requirements of the times which gave it birth. At Eton, the scholars upon the Foundation, who live in college and wear a particular dress, are in number forty ; that is, constitute about one-fourteenth part of the boys actually in attendance ; the other thirteen parts being composed of sons of the nobility and gentry from every quarter of the Empire, few of whom have any thoughts of entering the church : and yet it is that inconsiderable portion which was alone contemplated in the

original endowment of the school. For its sake that course of instruction was contrived and fixed by statute, which has been continued with little or no variation down to the present day, when it is applied indiscriminately to boys of a description, and with views, altogether different.

This system, it is manifest, cannot in these times remain much longer unchanged. At Eton, Harrow, Rugby, and in several of the other endowed schools of England, there is a movement towards reform, both in the discipline, and in the course of instruction pursued. But we must not expect the march of improvement in these schools to be rapid. The head masters may be all, as I know most of them to be, able and enlightened men; but they are hampered by deeds of gift, and impeded by other powers and authorities who must be carried along with them in every change that is proposed, but who are seldom willing to go. Indeed, the very inveteracy and enormity of the abuses are impediments in the way of speedy amelioration. It is enough, in the mean time, to have entered a caveat against charging such abuses to classical instruction, as if the account of the two were inseparable.

In turning from the view just given of the English great schools, to the corresponding institutions in this part of the empire, I shall take as examples the High School and the Academy of our own city.

Without entering into any comparison as to the manner of conducting the classical instruction on the two sides of the Tweed,—though from such comparison our own institutions have so little occasion to shrink, that I am confident they would gain by it, in the opinion of all impartial judges equally acquainted with both,—we may at least venture to affirm, that the avowed objects and known practice of our Edinburgh schools is more in unison than the English with reason and common sense, and better accommodated to the wants and wishes of the community. Arithmetic, geometry, English literature, French, and geography, are incorporated more or less into the system of both establishments, and are taught under the same roof, and enforced by the same sanctions and



authority, as the classical department. And if, in the distribution of the hours of study, the same or a greater amount of time is not allotted to these subsidiary branches, the arrangement proceeds upon two sound principles; *first*, that in every combined system of instruction, there ought to be a leading subject; and, *secondly*, that the study of the classics is well entitled to that distinction and pre-eminence. Both these principles require illustration.

I. In the first place, then, in every combined system of youthful instruction, there ought to be a leading subject, at once to discipline and inform the understanding, and to give unity and uniformity to the whole curriculum of study.

The propriety of this rule has never, so far as I know, been formally called in question in the theory of education. It seems to have been taken for granted, in all speculative discussions on the subject, that among the various sub-divisions of human knowledge through which the pupil must pass before he be thoroughly accomplished for the business and duties of life, there must be one which is to serve for the common access and high road to them all. The mind, it has been hitherto universally understood, must be prepared by the progymnastic discipline of a course of study, of which the chief and acknowledged excellence shall be, not merely, nor so much, to convey solid and serviceable information as to break in the faculties to their finest exercise,—to sharpen the wit, to fix the attention, to strengthen the memory, to promote reflection and self-examination, to unfold and direct the power of ratiocination, to mature the judgment, to awaken the imagination, to refine the taste, and to keep all the faculties in such a state of healthful evolution and equipoise, that they shall be ready in due time for good service in the particular line of any profession or accomplishment. The Homeric aphorism has hitherto been held a good one, and not more true in politics than in public instruction :—

Ουκ αγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίῃ. εἰς κοίρανὸν ἔστω,  
 Ἐἰς βασιλεὺς.—*Iliad*, B. 204.

The only doubt has been, who this lord of the ascendant should be.

And if the practice among ourselves has of late run counter to this principle, it proceeds, neither from the authority of the rule being disputed, nor from any theoretical assumption that an indiscriminate and simultaneous pursuit of all kinds of knowledge is to be preferred, but simply from a morbid impatience, which has become contagious among parents, to have every thing done at once, and in a short time. The natural consequence of the spread of this contagion has been a competition among teachers, who vie with and outbid each other in the number and variety of branches which they profess to teach. They are constrained, in self-defence, to pander to the short-sightedness and ignorance of parents, who insist upon crowding the whole business of instruction into a few months. Alike unable and unwilling to exercise discretion, either in the choice and sequence of subjects, or in estimating the fitness and capacity of the recipient, they are possessed with the single purpose and resolution, that no son or daughter of any of their acquaintances shall have more masters than their own, or more branches in hand at the same time. Meanwhile, the little victim, decked out in all the tinsel frippery of superficial acquirement,—its attention distracted, and its mind dissipated amidst a multiplicity of objects, and with no load-star to steer by through the brilliant confusion—is hurried from subject to subject and from class-room to class-room, paraded before admiring relatives, and sacrificed at last on the altar of parental vanity.

II. The other principle which I mentioned as regulating the arrangements of the two great schools of our city, is this, that no branch of instruction is so well entitled to take the lead in a course of liberal education, as the classical.

It is a title that rests on the assumption, that a rightly conducted classical education, while it cultivates and improves the moral as well as the intellectual faculties, does that office after a manner and in a direction better suited than any other for the use and embellishment of life. For if, on the one hand,

we look to the grammatical or philological part of the training,—that which has to do with the flexion of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, the rules of syntax, the derivations and affiliations of words, and the analysis, structure, and comprehension of sentences,—we shall find, in all these processes, when properly simplified and explained, a constant exercise in practical logic, which brings into play the powers of memory, of judgment, of abstraction and combination of ideas, and of reflection on the subjects of our own consciousness ;—which induces habits of quick and sustained attention, facility in sifting and comparing evidence, and promptitude in deciding ;—which produces, in short, a general acuteness and activity of the intellectual powers.

If, again, we look to what may be called the moral and philosophical part of a classical education,—that which has to do with the scope of the author, with his facts and reasonings, the wisdom of his views and the justness of his sentiments, with the beauty of his diction, the play of his fancy, and the felicity of his allusions,—it is easy to see what an inexhaustible fund of topics is furnished to the judicious teacher, of which to avail himself in opening the mind of his pupil to the love of knowledge and of virtue, in storing it with the lessons of wisdom and experience, and in forming and refining the taste.

Mathematics, exclusively pursued, either carry their votary to a region of their own, in the empyrean of pure unassailable truth and far apart from the concerns of this nether world ; or, if that heaven be not reached, they engage him in researches into brute matter, with its various properties, and their various applications ;—researches which are no doubt eminently useful and important, but, except when they are sublimed into the theories and investigations of natural philosophy as a science, are not of the most refining or elevating character.

The study of the classics, on the other hand, even without mathematics, connects the pupil at every step with the sympathies of his fellow-creatures,—with the passions, the inter-

ests, the duties, the occupations, the history, and the prospects of humanity.

If, in arranging the plan of a liberal education, we were not allowed to have both, but compelled to make our election, we would rather have classics without mathematics, than mathematics without classics. If both were allowed, we should doubtless avail ourselves of the permission; not hesitating, however, to give the foremost place to that study which exercises the greatest number of faculties, touches human affairs in the greatest variety of points, and by making us most familiar with the doings and sufferings of the world we are placed in, prepares us best for the part we are appointed to act in the drama of life.

The proofs and illustrations of these assertions I reserve for another and concluding Lecture; and shall content myself, for the present, with placing them under the shelter and sanction of authorities which, on questions relating to education, rank deservedly high.

In the first place, the view I have taken is in accordance with the practice of Prussia, in her *Gymnasias*,—as those schools are called where the children of the easy and opulent classes are educated. M. Cousin, so generally known in this country by his ‘Report on the state of Primary Instruction in Germany,’ has since published a similar account of the present state, in Prussia, of what he calls *instruction secondaire*, that is, the higher or liberal education. After enumerating the different subjects which that education embraces,—mathematics, geography and history, religion, the German and French languages, *les sciences naturelles*, and even elements of the philosophy of mind,—he states, as a fact which is true of all the *Gymnasias*, that, while due attention is paid to the different branches just enumerated, it is *classical* instruction, that is, the study of the languages of Greece and Rome, that takes the lead in the distribution of time and employment:—“*c’est toujours l’instruction classique qui domine.*”

Here, then, we have the conclusion arrived at in the wisest and most enlightened, and, I may add, what is of some weight

in the present argument, the most recent legislation which has yet been applied to the subject of the higher education. And this testimony is the more valuable, because in Prussia, and still more in Bavaria, and others of the German States, the very experiment was tried in which it is wished to embark us here, of dispensing with the classics in the training of youth. A war of words was long carried on between the Philanthropists, who advocated the abolition of the classics, and the Humanitarians, who supported their claims; which, after a temporary triumph to the former sect, has ended at last in their complete discomfiture, and in the return of the government and people of these countries to the true classical doctrine and practice.

And that this arrangement has the sanction of the distinguished philosopher just mentioned, will appear, not only from the earnest and unqualified terms in which he urges his own government to adopt the Prussian system of *secondary* instruction, as they have already adopted the *primary*, but also from the testimony which he bears to the worth and importance of classical learning, in the following eloquent passage:—

“Not only do I think it expedient to keep up our collegial plan of studies, more especially the philological department of it, but I am convinced that that part of our system ought to be strengthened and extended, in order that, while we maintain our incontestable superiority over Germany in the physical and mathematical sciences, we may be able to cope with that country in the solidity of our classical instruction. Classical studies are, in truth, beyond comparison, the most essential of all, conducing, as they do, to the knowledge of human nature, which they bring us to consider under all the variety of its aspects and relations; at one time, in the language and literature of nations who have left behind them memorable traces of their existence and glory; at another, in the pregnant vicissitudes of history, which continually renovate and improve society; and, finally, in that philosophy which reveals to us the simple elements, and the uniform organization, of that wondrous being, whom history, literature, and languages

successively clothe in forms the most diversified, and yet always bearing upon some more or less important part of his internal constitution. Classical studies maintain the sacred tradition of the intellectual and moral life of our species. To cripple, far more to destroy them, would, in my eyes, be an act of barbarism, an audacious attempt to arrest true civilization, a sort of high-treason against humanity."

But this is not the age for sheltering an argument under the authority either of enlightened governments or of eminent individuals. It is to Reason we must appeal. Reason, therefore, we must endeavour to enlist in the service of the classics ; and, if I mistake not, we shall find in her our firmest ally.

Meanwhile, before quitting the subject of the High School and Academy, I may be permitted to observe, that while no impartial person, equally acquainted with them and the great schools of England, will, I conceive, hesitate to admit that the latter are inferior to our own, both in the distribution of the pupil's time, and in the mode of teaching, it is not so easy to meet an objection which is very generally taken to our Edinburgh institutions. How does it happen, it is asked, if the system be so good, that so large a proportion of the pupils of both establishments leave school, after a five or six years' course of instruction, without more than a very slender acquaintance with the languages to which their time has been chiefly devoted ? Admitting this to be the case, (for I cannot see the use of suppressing a fact so notorious,) there are two ways of answering the question. First, it may be said that, in any system of school-training to which numerous assemblages of boys are subjected, there must be some who take the lead, and others who lag behind ; and, secondly, that it is an error to imagine that the time and labour bestowed have been lost, in cases where the languages in question may not have been mastered.

But though these are propositions, the truth of which cannot be contested, they will not furnish a satisfactory answer to the objection, unless it can be proved that the number of unsuccessful results is not greater than may be fairly account-

ed for by the natural diversity of talent that must always exist among so many individuals, and by the variety of circumstances in which they are placed. Now this, I fear, is a ground of defence which it will neither be right nor safe to take. It would be a libel on classical studies to admit, that so long a period as six years is insufficient to impart a knowledge and a love of these pursuits to a greater proportion of the youth than is proved by experience to have acquired them. We must look, I apprehend, for the cause of a fact which it is idle to think of denying, neither in the nature of the studies themselves,—which, when rightly set about, are quite attainable by minds of moderate capacity, and to them of all others most improving,—nor in the character of the teachers, who are all men of high and undoubted qualification,—but in circumstances which would produce a similar result under any set of teachers, and whatever were the leading object of the instruction.

I allude to the long-established practice of carrying forward *all* the pupils in regular and uniform progression, and without stated examinations, from the lowest stage of the school to the highest, and of thus making the *time of attendance*, not the *amount of proficiency*, a passport to the rector's class. The unavoidable consequence of this arrangement is, that the difference between the clever and the dull, the diligent and the idle, which becomes perceptible enough at the end of the first term of study, is increased from year to year, till at the end of the fourth, they are handed over to the rector in all the various gradations between good scholarship and comparative ignorance. Like ill-matched horses in a race, they start abreast, but soon present a straggling line, which lengthens and separates farther asunder at every step they advance in the course. I am aware of the difficulties that stand in the way of any arrangement for testing the progress of the pupils at certain intervals, with the view of promoting those who should have greatly outstript their fellows, and of checking the advance of those who should be found below the average proficiency. I am aware also, that the call for it is less urgent, in proportion

as the numbers are smaller, and the methods improved; but it deserves to be considered whether a different practice might not recruit the numbers, and more than compensate for any inconveniences that are likely, in the first instance, to result from its adoption. At Eton, and other great schools in England, "losing a remove," and "gaining a double remove," at the half-yearly examinations, are comparatively rare occurrences; but the terms are familiar to the pupils, and have a salutary effect on their minds.

Such a system of examination and promotion, acting at once by the dread of exposure and the hope of distinction, would, if introduced into our institutions, exert a wholesome influence on every mind in the school, and vivify even the inertest portion of the mass. The power, no doubt, of promoting and degrading, is one which would require to be used discreetly and rarely; but the very knowledge of its existence, and the conviction of its reality by the occasional exercise of it, would have a marvellous effect in stimulating exertion and repressing languor and idleness, and would go farther to remove all just ground of dissatisfaction and complaint, than any other change or addition that could be made. There might be room for minor improvements, in the simplification of grammars, the perfecting of the monitorial method where it exists, and the introduction of it where it has not been attempted; and in one of the seminaries, perhaps, a little more attention might be paid to our own language and literature. But so much change has been made there already, (and it may be doubted if always for the better,) that a friend to the seminary might well be disposed to compound for all farther alteration, till he saw the effect of that last thought of, but most salutary change of all, which I have been now recommending.\*

\* Since these Lectures were delivered, an innovation has been proposed, and the proposal received with approbation by the Town-Council, the Patrons of the School, the wisdom and propriety of which are somewhat problematical. It has been remitted to the College Committee, to organize a plan for having Lectures on Natural Philosophy delivered to the pupils of the High School every Saturday, after the ordinary business of that day, and of the week, is concluded. Such lectures, from the very nature of the audience they are in-



Having thus endeavoured to settle some preliminary points, we are prepared to enter more fully into the long-agitated question concerning the utility of a classical education ; to examine the grounds on which its advocates maintain that it is entitled to take the lead in the curriculum of youthful study,

tended for, must necessarily be of a superficial character, and rather calculated to captivate the senses than inform or discipline the understanding. It is impossible that boys, of whom very few have reached fourteen, can be prepared to enter on the wide subject of Natural Philosophy, with the preliminary knowledge and the habits of thought which alone can give it value. The very allotment of a single hour in the week to such a subject, proves that it can be nothing more than a pastime ; and it is one which will encroach, without either necessity or compensation, on the time, already quite short enough, which the boys have for bodily recreation and exercise. Supposing that these Lectures be well got up, attractively delivered, and illustrated by showy experiments, their tendency will be to wean the young student from the other studies of the place, both classical and mathematical, which require a severer exercise of mind, and yield a smaller return of immediate gratification. The mental discipline of laborious tasks will be rendered more and more unpopular among the boys ; their eyes will be dazzled, and their minds captivated, with brilliant displays, which, at their age, and with their slender acquirements, are little better than a phantasmagoria. There is no permanent advantage in forestalling those satisfactions which are reserved for the student, when, having gone through the preparatory discipline of classics and mathematics, he is introduced to the powers of nature, and the wonderful phenomena of the universe, with a mind awakened to their grandeur, and able to follow and to appreciate the demonstrations of Science.

We shall be told, that, as regards many of the pupils, the regular business of education terminates with the High School, and that it is therefore desirable that this description of boys should get what they can of natural and physical knowledge, before they betake themselves to their different walks in life. But it is a short-sighted policy, that, for such an object, would expose to risk the character of the school as a place of classical discipline, and overlook the interests of those who frequent it because it is so, and with ulterior views. And with regard to the boys who go no farther, they will have temptation and opportunity enough to attend Lectures of the kind proposed, without being seduced, by the temptation of such gewgaws, from those habits of application and vigorous thought, which the present training is so well calculated to produce.

A taste for natural science is more likely to be created in the minds of the pupils, and with less risk of detriment to the great ends of High School education, by having knowledge of that sort mixed up with the daily prelection and examination on the lessons. To a skilful and well-informed teacher, occasions are continually arising out of the text of the author in hand, for conveying information and awakening curiosity. Familiar views and explanations, given

and to point out more particularly the steps and processes by which instruction in the classics may be made subservient to the improvement of the young mind.

thus in illustration of the lesson, are delightful to boys. They relieve and reconcile to severer studies ; and they cherish the love of knowledge, without engendering conceit, or indisposing to the labour of the daily task.\*

\* The Plan of Saturday Lectures was carried out by the Town Council, in spite of the remonstrances of Dr. Carson and myself, and proved an entire failure. For an account of more recent innovations, equally questionable, and it is to be hoped, equally ephemeral, see " Rationale of School Discipline," p. 175.

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## LECTURE THIRD.

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DELIVERED SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7. 1835.

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### REASONS FOR THINKING THAT CLASSICAL TRAINING CANNOT WELL BE DISPENSED WITH IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION.

THE question as to the utility of instruction in the Classics is by no means a new one; but it has been agitated of late by the adverse party with more than ordinary earnestness and pertinacity. "Why," it is asked, "should so much time and care be expended in learning to call the same things by two or three names instead of one? and even admitting such attainment to be desirable, why insist that these names (if they must be learned over and above the vernacular terms) shall belong to two languages which have not been spoken, as we wish them to be acquired, for nearly two thousand years? Do we add much to our stock of useful ideas, by learning that that which the word *apple* tells us, in our mother tongue, is a fruit of certain properties, was called *pomum* by one people, and *μηλον* by another, both of whom, with all their institutions, have long since passed away from the earth? Is there any knowledge in these classics so very much worth having, or so unattainable in our own tongue, that we must devote the best hours of the most precious years of our boyhood, to acquire the power of gathering it with difficulty in the original language, rather than with ease in our own?" These are questions which every one has a right to put, and a right to have an answer to. It is in vain that we try to avoid a direct reply,

by affecting an air of mystery,—by quoting the fable of the fox and the sour grapes,—or by talking of some indescribable charm, some *nescio quid* of excellence and perfection in the language and literature of antiquity, which the initiated alone can apprehend and appreciate; and by refusing on these grounds to reason at all with the opponents of classical education, just as one would decline to discuss colours with a blind man. If we mean to defend either the principle or the practice that has hitherto prevailed, we must descend into the arena and grapple with our antagonists: some firmer ground of defence must be taken than custom or usage can furnish.

Proceeding, then, upon this view of the matter, and abjuring all right of appeal to any thing but argument and fair reasoning, I am ready for my own part to admit, in the fullest extent, that whensoever the teaching of Greek and Latin is directed to no other object, and goes, in point of fact, no farther than to give the power of substituting one word, or set of words, in the place of another; when it is limited to the mere act of transferring the sense of an ancient author into something equivalent in English, including even the more difficult task of converting portions of our own language into something resembling the composition of an ancient;—in all such cases I admit, that the true aim of education has been lost sight of; that the memory has been cultivated far too exclusively, and that faculty itself not in the best direction, nor in the most wholesome exercise; and that, instead of attempting to justify such practice, we cannot too soon alter or amend it. I will admit, also, that for the two or three centuries during which classical acquirement has been made a prime object in the education of the middle and higher ranks over Europe, it has been very generally taught in such a way as to give a colourable pretext to the statements of the objectors. Nor is it possible to deny, and I have indeed already admitted, that, in contemplating the manner of conducting some of the oldest and most favoured institutions in our own island, we are reminded of the discipline of a cloister, where indeed the system originated, rather than of the training

which it is proper the youth should receive who are destined, not to be monks or to spend their lives in conventual libraries, but to take their several ways in life, and be called on to judge and to act in the infinitely varied relations of modern society.

But while I make these concessions,—while I freely admit that a mere multiplication and heaping up in the memory of words and phrases, is little better than unprofitable waste of time and labour,—I am prepared at the same time to contend, that no instrument for training the youth of what may be called the educated classes has yet been invented, which is so well adapted for that purpose as a course of classical instruction conducted on enlightened and philosophical principles. I have not stated the proposition as one of universal application. If a youth is destined to be a ship's carpenter, an optician, a practical engineer, or to pass his days in the details of some mechanical employment, without any higher aim than excellence in his particular department, however scientific that may be; in all such cases, a course of classical education might fairly be considered as misplaced. But with a view to that general cultivation of the mental powers and capacities, which is to give a man the use of his faculties in their most serviceable state, to bring him up to the level of other men's thoughts, and make him an acute, observant, and intelligent member of the community he belongs to, I am not aware that any method has yet been devised, which either has produced, or in the dispassionate judgment of philosophy is so likely to produce, a succession of citizens at once useful and ornamental to the commonwealth, as a course of intellectual discipline which takes classical instruction for the groundwork.

In proof of this position, it will be necessary to enter a little more into detail, and attend to the successive steps and processes which such a course of instruction consists of.

In the first place, then, of all the faculties of the mind, memory is that which admits of being earliest exercised, and trained to habits of susceptibility and retentiveness. Now, the initiatory processes of classical discipline are of a kind

particularly well fitted to call forth and to strengthen that faculty ; for, next to the immediate perceptions of the external senses, language is doubtless the subject in which a young mind feels itself most at home.

I have said, next to the perceptions of the senses ; for, far be it from the advocate of the classics to consider the study of the languages as opposed to, or exclusive of, a knowledge of external nature. This is the error into which many of our adversaries fall, when they insist on our abandoning ancient literature, and devoting all the attention of our youth to the powers, properties, and appearances of the material world. But why not have both ? A desire to become acquainted with the objects and phenomena of nature, and a very considerable actual amount of such knowledge, it is quite possible, by a judicious system of infant tuition, to impart in a still earlier stage of education than that we are now referring to ; —at a time when the senses, and particularly those of seeing and hearing, being fresh and young, and full of curiosity, should be directed to their appropriate objects, and inured to habits of accurate and discriminating observation. This is all that is desirable,—all indeed that is practicable at a very early age. The demonstrations and deductions of physical science, and the minute classifications of natural history, must come at a much latter period. The attempt to anticipate them before the natural development of the faculties at the approach of manhood, might produce a few prodigies of precocity ; but, if applied generally, would stunt the mind's growth, which cannot be healthy, unless, like that of the body, it be gradual. In the meanwhile, so nearly instinctive is the faculty of speech in man, that the study of language affords the finest instrument for evolving the powers of the youthful intellect, and particularly that which it is then most important to cultivate,—the memory. There is ample room, at the same time, in the initiatory steps, for cherishing the first feeble efforts of the reasoning faculty and of the judgment, and above all, for bringing out and exercising that reflex power of attending to what is

passing in the mind itself, which is the distinctive characteristic of intellectual existence.

It is in this preliminary stage, I admit, that the helping hand of philosophy is eminently required, to remove difficulties, to smooth asperities, and to seize and take advantage, in teaching, of those analogies and generalizations in language, which, when dexterously presented to a boy's mind, are apprehended with the rapidity of lightning. There is no doubt that much of the obloquy that has been cast on the study of the ancient languages, and most of the failures that occur in the teaching of them, arise from the want of philosophical views in the construction of the grammars generally employed. Instead of following nature, by presenting in strong relief to the young mind the great outlines of the language; instead of illustrating these by comparing or contrasting them with the corresponding parts of the vernacular tongue, and thus fixing indelibly the leading rules by appeals to the testimony of consciousness; it is but too common to confound and appal the pupil at the very outset with an undigested mass of rules without reasons, where the facts of the language, whether they be of the broad and general kind which belong to universal grammar, or whether they be mere peculiarities and idioms which are reducible to no principle, are all, rule and exception, huddled together, taught at one and the same time, and confounded in the boy's memory, as if they were of the same description and of equal importance. If grammars for the use of schools were what they ought to be, they would serve as text-books to guide the teacher in eliciting and exercising the finest capacities of youth, and in giving a right direction to what I scarcely hesitate to call the noble *instinct* of speech.

The leading facts and general rules in the structure of any language result from the laws of human thought, and, when put into words, are the expression of principles and mental operations common to all mankind, which develope themselves spontaneously, and which begin to be unconsciously acted upon at a very early age. When simply expressed and judiciously explained, they find an echo in every breast, and scarce-

ly ever fail to interest the attention and command the assent of the young. If too little advantage is taken of this appeal to the principles of our nature in the actual business of teaching, the fault lies in our grammars, and furnishes an argument, not against the study itself, but for improving the method of pursuing it.

But without dwelling longer on the initiatory steps, let us suppose the boy advanced beyond the threshold, and engaged, after due preparation, and under the guidance of an able and judicious teacher, in perusing the works of the ancient writers. If, indeed, the system pursued in this stage be one of hard, dry construing, involving all the intricacies of parsing, syntax, and prosody, and concluding with a literal version of the passage,—and nothing more; the process, it must be confessed, tends rather to sharpen than to expand the youthful faculties, and, if carried no farther, will fall lamentably short of the great ends of education.

I would not, however, be understood to undervalue such analysis of sentences, and minute examination and decomposition of words, or to represent it as a part of classical training that can or ought to be dispensed with. On the contrary, it is not less useful and necessary to the young scholar, towards becoming familiar with the structure and idiom of a language, than dissection is to the young anatomist; and, when skilfully conducted, is one of the finest exercises of the youthful understanding, admirably adapted for rendering more acute its powers of memory and analysis, for throwing it back on its own resources, and for teaching it to sift, to discriminate, and to decide. Its efficacy in these respects may indeed be justly regarded as one of the most important benefits of a well-ordered education, and one which I know not where else to look for the means of conferring so certainly and so completely. Those of my hearers who are at all conversant with the great prose writers of antiquity, and particularly with Cicero and Livy, will understand what I refer to when I speak of the long and intricate sentences with which those authors abound. Now, let any one select such a sentence,



and observe the great variety of parts or clauses of which it consists; the manner in which they are dovetailed into, and made dependent upon, one another; the distance words are placed at, which their use in the sentence and their concord or government prove to be connected; the involution of the sense, one assertion circumscribing and being qualified by another, and that again by a third, and the whole wrapt up and infolded, clause within clause, in mutual dependency, like wheel within wheel in a piece of complicated machinery;—and then let him say, whether the analytical process by which these relations and reciprocal bearings of the long period are detected and explained, and the form and pressure of the main affirmation with its whole retinue of subordinate parts are exposed in lucid order, be not an exercise of mind which is not merely useful for the particular passage under discussion, or the particular language the pupil is engaged in acquiring, but one which can scarcely fail to excite and quicken his faculties, in a way most conducive to the general improvement of his intellectual character. I have no wish to utter a word in disparagement of accurate observation and attentive study of external nature, and of the powers and productions that are known to us by the senses,—an employment of the faculties not to be neglected in any stage of education, and which can scarcely, as I observed before, be commenced too soon; but it does appear to me, that no gathering, naming and ticketing of plants and minerals, no system of pullies and combination of mechanical forces, no watching of retorts and crucibles, can supply the place of the keen and searching exercise of mind which I have just described, or ought to supersede and supplant it.

Great, however, as I conceive the benefits to be of a minute anatomy of sentences, followed up by a version so literal as to vouch for a perfect comprehension on the part of the pupil of all the minutiae of grammar and syntax, I regard this preliminary process, after all, as but a subordinate branch of classical instruction,—indispensable, no doubt, as a basis on which to rear what is to follow, on account both of the actual

knowledge it conveys and the habits of mind it induces; but no more to be considered as the whole, than a building is thought to be complete, when the foundations are laid, and the scaffolding erected. It is common enough, I admit, to stop short with this process, and to think that every thing is done when the pupil has acquired dexterity in the grammatical analysis. But it is to degrade and desecrate the writings of the ancients, thus to make their noblest passages no more than a vehicle for exercising on flexion, conjugation, syntax, and idiom. And to the frequency of such practice we may fairly ascribe the clamour which has been raised, and so far not without reason, against classical education. But we must not argue from the abuse of a thing against the use of it; we are not in search of what is wrong in practice, but of what is right in principle.

Let us, then, in the next place, survey the wide field that opens before us, as soon as the preliminary work we have spoken of is completed.

The pupil is now to be considered as engaged in the perusal of those works of ancient genius, to whose very excellence we owe it, that they did not perish in the flood of barbarism that swept inferior productions into oblivion,—works, therefore, which, having been the admiration of every age since they were written, are invested with a glory and an authority, which time only can bestow upon excellence. And of these works, containing the most matured thoughts of the noblest minds clothed in a language of peculiar pomp, expressiveness, and melody, it is the teacher's fault if the pupil shall not read the fittest and choicest portions.

But how are “the thoughts that breathe,” “the words that burn,” to be unveiled to the apprehension of the youthful scholar, and so brought home to his understanding, his fancy, and his feelings, as to produce those sensations of wonder and delight, which they never fail to excite in the mind of the adept, and which, in their first novelty, may be likened to those of the Trojan hero, in surveying the charmed gifts of his goddess mother which are to render him invincible?—

"Arma sub adversâ posuit radiantia quercu.  
 Ille Deas donis et tanto lætus honore  
 Expleri nequit, atque oculos per singula volvit ;  
 Miraturque, interque manus et brachia versat."

The same care, I answer, that presided over the selection, must be exercised also in the illustration, of the passages read. In the *first* place, obscurities must be cleared up which may arise from allusions to the peculiar manners, customs, and laws, and to the institutions, civil, military, and religious, of antiquity. Under this head, it is evident that frequent opportunities are afforded, not only of throwing light on the most interesting topics of Roman and Grecian antiquities and history, but of comparing or contrasting them with the corresponding parts of our own constitutional system, of awakening curiosity to become better acquainted with both, and of introducing the pupil to ever-varying, and to him no less attractive than improving, views of human character and human affairs. *2dly*, Scarcely a page of the classics can be read, without some river, mountain, city, or remarkable site, being mentioned or alluded to,—thus presenting occasions from time to time, of dwelling on the condition, physical and political, of the ancient world,—of comparing it in both respects with the present, and of thus inspiring a taste for geography and topography, by investing the study of them with a deeper interest. In the *third* place, After all kinds of illustration, direct and collateral, have been thus brought to bear on the individual passage, and its sense has been fully made out, it remains to trace its connection with what goes before and follows, to fit it into its place as an integral part of the whole, and in this way to accustom the youthful mind to connect the several links in a chain of ideas. Accordingly, whether it be history he is engaged in perusing, he is led to mark the series of events as they evolve themselves in the narrative, the skill of the historian in disposing and grouping them, and the bearing they all have on the main points of the story: or, whether an oration of Cicero or of Demosthenes be in hand, he is led to follow the train of the reasoning, and mark the dexterity with

which the pleader marshals his arguments, giving prominence and full display to the weighty, and using them to mask the weaker points, and to cripple and break down the array of his adversary : or whether it be a poem that forms the subject of prelection, he is led to admire the beauty of the descriptions and allusions, and the richness of the imagery ; and, amidst the ornaments and graces with which the poet's fancy embellishes his work, to trace his unity of purpose, and the consecutive train of his ideas. And in all these different kinds of composition, and particularly in the last, we shall fail to extract all the good they are capable of yielding, if we do not, in the *fourth* place, embrace every opportunity of placing alongside of the most striking passages read, parallel ones, either from the same author, or from other classics, or from the distinguished writers of our own country. This is an engaging, no less than an improving exercise for young minds : they require only to be put on the track, and they will hunt out many resemblances of thought and expression ; and in the very pursuit, they become acquainted with, and acquire a relish for, the standard poets of their own language. To be thus invited to observe whence and how modern poets have borrowed from or imitated the ancients, and how, without borrowing or imitation, different writers handle the same subject, is one of the best modes of inoculating with the love of literature, and forming the taste.

And all the various information and mental exercise under the different heads I have described, it is important to observe, are thus presented and conveyed, not in formal lectures and continued discourse addressed to minds indifferently prepared and therefore but little disposed to profit by them, but in short, familiar, and almost conversational notices, listened to with avidity, because they spring out of a passage on which attention has been recently bestowed, and which serves as the text to impress and recall the information communicated. The instruction, too, is exactly of the kind and to the amount which excites curiosity without satisfying it,—which promotes rather than stifles farther inquiry. It opens up glimpses and vistas

of knowledge as diversified as the minds to which they are presented, and thus exposes all to receive an impetus in the direction in which the tendencies of each are most apt to carry him, giving to the pupils an additional interest in whatever they either read, or see passing around them, nay, occupying and colouring even their solitary thoughts.

Such is the nature and tendency of the *oral* instruction that flows naturally from a judicious method of teaching the classics. But we are yet far from having exhausted the benefits to be derived from such a course of discipline. For, let us consider what endless variety of themes for *written* exercises, adapted to every diversity of talent and capacity, must be furnished by the discussions and illustrations mentioned above. Of this kind are translations, English and Latin, in prose and in verse, which themselves furnish a theme for valuable information in the remarks made, and judgments passed on them, by the teacher,—abstracts of historical narrative, or of oratorical argument,—dissertations on points treated of by the author in hand,—criticism on the passages read, and summaries of grammatical and philological discussions. The resources of the instructor are thus multiplied an hundredfold. Sparks are constantly struck off from the sacred fire that is ever burning on the altar of ancient genius, which, flying in all directions, light on the susceptible minds of the young, kindle in their hearts the love of freedom and of virtue, and inform their whole thoughts with nobleness.

If, in addition to all these different means of illustrating the classics, we make occasional excursions into the field of general criticism, and endeavour to ascertain the principles upon which we feel admiration for the masterpieces of antiquity; if, deducing from those principles the rules of judging, and refusing to be guided by blind partiality, we venture, not petulantly, but with the reverence due to names so sacred, to “hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;” if, to quicken our perception and our relish of what is exquisite in writing, we institute a comparison between the kindred productions of ancient and modern genius, detecting the imitations which often do equal honour to both,

and adjusting their respective claims to our homage and admiration,—we shall be laying the foundation of that refinement and delicacy of taste, which gives the last finish to the character of an accomplished gentleman.

After even so brief and hasty a sketch of what may be done for the training of youth by a course of classical discipline, I think myself entitled to ask its impugnors what is the process they propose to substitute for this,—it being taken for granted that the end in view is not so much to rear a youth for a particular trade, craft, or profession, as to bestow on his mind that general cultivation, and give him that free and dexterous use of his faculties, which will enable him to excel in any.

What means, let me ask, shall we have recourse to, different from those above described, to accomplish the youthful mind for the purposes of life, and give it the culture required for a liberal profession? By what other treatment or manipulation shall we prepare so rich a mould, trench it so deeply, pulverize it so thoroughly, plough it and cross-plough it so frequently, give it so effectual a summer-fallow, and sow so much precious seed, and promising so abundant a crop of all that is required for the use and embellishment of life? It is so much easier to destroy than to build up, and it is, besides, so impossible, I conceive, to meet this question with a direct answer, that the enemies of the classics will probably shift their ground, and evasively reply,—All this is well enough, if it were done; but nobody will pretend that such practice is general; the picture drawn is purely ideal.—But even if the practice were more rare than it is, we cannot, as I have said before, admit the argument against the use of a thing from the abuse of it; it is enough for us to show the tendencies and capabilities of the study, and to challenge our adversaries either to disprove their existence, or to show us a course of early discipline which possesses them to a greater extent, and with less chance of imperfection and abuse in the teaching. A single instance of success, and there are many, is as good for our pur-

pose as a thousand. The argument from present practice proves nothing against the principle.

But, again, it may be argued, Why might not all this be done, and done more compendiously and expeditiously, by taking the works of our own English authors for the substratum of this intellectual and moral training? My answer is, that with such means, it could not, I think, be done at all. In order to maintain this argument, it is not necessary that one should be an exclusive admirer of ancient literature, and blind to the merits of our own English writers. I claim for the ancients no faultless excellence,—no immeasurable superiority. The rapture which some people seem to feel in perusing Homer and Virgil, Livy and Tacitus, while they turn over the pages of Shakespeare and Milton, Hume and Robertson, with coldness and indifference, is either pure affectation or gross self-delusion. For I am fully satisfied that we are in no want of models in our own English tongue, which, for depth of thought and soundness of reasoning, for truth of narrative and what has been called the ‘philosophy of history,’ nay, even for poetical beauty, tenderness, and sublimity, may fairly challenge a comparison with the most renowned productions of antiquity.

The languages, however, in which these qualities are embodied, are essentially and widely different, not so much in the words or combinations of letters that respectively compose them (for in that respect we shall see presently there are resemblances numerous and striking enough to shew to a certain degree identity of origin,) but in genius, in structure, and in idiom. The ancient are languages of flexion and conjugation, expressing the relations of things to one another, and the variations of the verb in time, person, number, mood, and voices, by changes on the terminations of the words; all, or nearly all of which, we express by separate small particles and monosyllables, which, to prevent ambiguity and confusion, have their places fixed, and must stand in juxta-position to the words they are intended to affect. Hence two results; one, that our English sentences admit of very slight and rare

deviations from a precise definite arrangement of words; and the other, that modern, and more especially English composition, is necessarily overrun with monosyllables, most of which, in our language at least, terminate in consonants. The ancient languages, on the contrary, from the circumstance of their incorporating the expression of various relations among objects and ideas into the words themselves, derive two advantages. In the first place, by avoiding a crowd of such little words as encumber our diction, they acquire a pomp, sonorousness, and condensation of meaning, "a long-resounding march and energy divine," which we cannot look for in our modern dialects: and, secondly, they admit a variety in the collocation of words, and a freedom of transposition, which materially contribute, in the hands of an accomplished writer, both to mould his periods into the most perfect music and melody to the ear, and what is of more consequence still, to present them in the most striking forms to the understanding and imagination of his reader.

It is, indeed, a great and just boast of these languages, (which have been called, from the circumstance, transpositive,) that this liberty of arrangement enables the speaker or writer to dispose his thoughts to the best advantage, and to place in most prominent relief those which he wishes to be peculiarly impressive: and it is thus that they are pre-eminently fitted for the purposes of eloquence and poetry. To the same peculiarities in the structure of the ancient languages it is owing, that in them the writers were enabled to construct those long and curiously involved sentences, which any attempt to translate literally serves only to perplex and obscure, but which presented to the ancient reader, as they do to the modern imbued with his taste and perceptions, a beautiful, and, in spite of its complexity, a sweetly harmonizing system of thoughts. I have already alluded to the exertion of mind required to perceive all the bearings of such a sentence, as to an exercise well fitted for sharpening the faculties; and this view of the ancient tongues,—considered as instruments of thought widely differing from, and in many respects superior to, our own,—is one



which recommends them to be used also as instruments of education.

Again, our mother tongue is so entwined and identified with our early and ordinary habits of thinking and speaking, it forms so much a part of ourselves from the nursery upwards, that it is extremely difficult to place it, so to speak, at a sufficient distance from the mind's eye to discern its nature, or to judge of its proportions. It is, besides, so uncompounded in its structure,—so patchwork-like in its composition, so broken down into particles, so scanty in its inflections, and so simple in its fundamental rules of construction, that it is next to impossible to have a true grammatical notion of it, or to form indeed any correct ideas of grammar and philology at all, without being able to compare and contrast it with another language, and that other of a character essentially different.

But how much is the title of the ancient languages to the distinction we claim for them strengthened and enforced by the consideration, that to them our own, and most of the other dialects of modern Europe, changed as they are in form and structure, owe a very large portion of their vocabulary. The more immediate descendants of the Latin,—the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and French, are little else than corruptions of the parent stock, altered in shape, and frittered down in the parts, but the same in substance: and the complicated tissue of our own tongue is so wrought up and interwoven, with the Latin chiefly, and also with the Greek, that it is next to impossible to unravel its texture, or understand its nature and uses, without a competent knowledge of both. It may be regarded as a most agreeable and improving exercise to young minds, and one which will engage much of our attention here, to trace English words, through the various forms and significations which they have assumed in the intermediate stages of French and Italian, up to their roots in the Latin or Greek tongues.

Indeed, when one considers these venerable forms of speech in connection with the history of Europe from the times in

which they were spoken to the present day, one is tempted to compare them to splendid edifices reared by the genius of antiquity, fairly proportioned, and presenting an elevation of squared and polished blocks of the finest marble; but which, at a period when time had begun to impair without destroying their beauty, an earthquake and tempest suddenly coming on, shook from their foundations, and shivered into fragments. Out of these fragments, with whatever other materials came in our way, we moderns, when the storm had subsided, built ourselves habitations, convenient enough in point of accommodation, and destined to lodge many a gifted tenant, but nevertheless devoid of the grace, and decoration, and exquisite symmetry of the original structure. And if a few specimens of this architecture have escaped the wreck of ages, and survive in all their primitive chasteness and elegant simplicity, shall we not teach our youth to visit them, to admire their fair proportions, to study their cunning workmanship, and to imitate whatever is imitable of their perfection? In the volumes you have read, or are preparing to read in this place, there are remains of antiquity, nobler, more graceful, and more entire, than the ruins of Pæstum and the Acropolis; and while our very antagonists pretend to join in the admiration which these architectural ruins inspire, and to envy those who have had the good fortune to behold them on their site, shall we, by a cruel and infanticidal act, block up the avenue to still holier monuments,—those sacred repositories of mind, wherein its brightest manifestations are consecrated, and which, instead of being, like the other, distant and almost inaccessible, are with us, and about us, and ever ready, when invited, *pernoctare nobiscum, peregrinari, rusticari?*

The very difficulties encountered in the way to these treasures,—though they ought not to be multiplied, and there is much room and a strong call for diminishing their number,—are not without their advantages to the student. There is no royal road to great attainments, nor is it desirable there should be; the labour of acquiring is itself half the reward, both in pleasure and in profit. What is easily learned makes little

impression, and is soon forgotten. Hence an advantage in classical education, which may be regarded as an important one; that the variety of aspects in which, as I explained at the outset, the portions read are viewed,—grammatical, syntactical, antiquarian, historical, mythological, geographical,—are all, besides their own peculiar uses, just so many means of riveting the sense—when at last brought out in all its fulness—permanently in the memory. And this, indeed, is one of the sources of the secret charm and depth and dignity, which to well-trained minds seem to invest and hover around the choice passages of the classics. It would be impossible to dwell at such length, and with such improving effect, on equal portions of our mother tongue. The *Paradise Lost* is perhaps, of all compositions in our language, that which would best admit of being made the ground-work of curious prelection and interesting discussion; and I should be glad to find that divine poem adopted as a text-book in school or college, and taking its place, as it might most worthily do, alongside of the productions of Homer and Virgil. But one circumstance which marks out Milton's poetry for this distinction is, the reverence and devotion he every where shews for those ancient models, in whose steps he was proud to tread. Hence the necessity of recurring perpetually to the classics, if we would enter into the mind of the author, or comprehend half of his beauties. Strip Milton of his translations and imitations of the classics, and still more of those direct and distant allusions to particular thoughts or expressions of theirs, and he will be found, to use a phrase of his own, "shorn of his beams."

Finally, much as I dislike mysticism and factitious extacies, I am not disposed to overlook or discount the delightful associations connected with compositions, which, though they carry us back to a remote antiquity and an order of things very different from the present, are true to the great principles of our common nature; nor am I inclined to quarrel with prepossessions and preferences for works which are stamped with the approbation of all the intervening ages. Is nothing to be allowed to the witchery of a great name? no weight or value to be

attached to the evidence of a cloud of witnesses who have testified to the worth of the classics by the use they have made of them, in works of their own imbued with the spirit of the ancients, and breathing, as it were, through their lips? Must we adopt the utilitarian logic so far as to become, henceforth, insensible to all the references and felicitous expressions which our own classics are constantly making to, or borrowing from, those of antiquity,—expressions and references so inseparably wrought into the web and tissue of our finest literature, that they give to the whole of it a relative character? Must we renounce all attempts to execute, and all power even to comprehend, those delicate touches and happy allusions to things classical, which distinguish the speeches of our most eminent orators? Must we doom ourselves never more to hear, or, if we hear, neither to relish or understand those appropriate quotations which come like a gleam of light on the landscape, or ‘rise like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,’ diffusing around an atmosphere of odours ‘redolent of joy and youth,’ and filling the mind with noble fancies and cherished recollections? Must such ornaments be discarded in all time to come from our Senate? and where they are already recorded, in the published specimens of parliamentary eloquence, as having fallen from the lips of a Burke, a Pitt, a Fox, a Wyndham, and a Canning, must they become to the next generation a sealed letter? Taste, feeling, public character, all the fondest remembrances of ancient and modern times, oppose themselves to so lame and impotent a conclusion. Introduce such a change in the training of our ingenuous youth, and we shall soon justify the bitterest taunts of our enemies, by degenerating, in the worst sense of the term, into a nation of shop-keepers.

The strongest case against the advocates for classical education, is the practice that has hitherto prevailed of making it so general, as to include boys of whom it is known beforehand that they are to engage in the ordinary pursuits of trade and commerce; who are not intended to prosecute their education farther than school, and are not therefore likely to follow out

the subject of their previous studies much, or at all, beyond the period of their attendance there.

I willingly allow, and have already admitted, that a youth who looks forward from the very outset to the practice of some mechanical or even purely scientific art, may employ his time better in acquiring manual dexterity and mathematical knowledge, than in making himself imperfectly acquainted with a dead language. There must be in all very large and populous towns, a class of persons in tolerably easy circumstances, and whose daily business affords them considerable leisure, but who contemplate for their children nothing beyond such acquirements as shall enable them to follow out the gainful occupation, and move in the narrow circle, in which they themselves, and their fathers before them, have spent a quiet and inoffensive life. It was for youth of this sort that the Prussian government, with a sagacity and foresight characteristic of all its educational proceedings, provided what are called *buerger* and *mittel-schulen*,—intermediate steps between the *volks-schulen*, or primary schools, and the Gymnasia, or *gelehrte-schulen*; and France has wisely followed the example of Prussia, by ordaining the establishment of *écoles moyennes*, called also *écoles primaires supérieures*, in all towns above a certain population.

It would, no doubt, be a desirable addition to our means of training the young in this city, if an institution were formed, which, without attempting ornament or variety, should profess to give no instruction beyond what an education, strictly mechanical and commercial, might be thought to require. But with regard to the great bulk of the middle class of easy and respectable citizens, who can contrive to combine the habits and details of business with the larger views imparted by solitary reading and social intercourse, it were much to be regretted that the youth of this description should be precluded from all chance of that general cultivation of the intellectual powers, and that humanizing influence of ancient literature, which result, as I have endeavoured to shew, from a well-directed course of classical instruction.

In attending such a course in a public seminary, they have got, it may be, but an imperfect knowledge of Latin ; and the little they once had, may eventually be lost. But they have gone through the drill, though they may have forgotten their exercise ; and it has given them a firmer step and a more graceful carriage. They cannot, perhaps, construe a classic on opening it ; but they have sat on the same benches with the best of the land ; they have learned to respect themselves ; they have read and dwelt upon the noble passages, stamped as they are with the authority of ages, in which the free and manly spirit of antiquity is embalmed ; and they have heard them commented on and illustrated by their teachers, till the sentiments they contain have become part of their nature, and continue to influence their character and conduct long after the words, and even the language in which they were first conveyed, have faded from their memory.

If we would have these views confirmed by an appeal to facts and experience, we need not go farther than the town we live in. Nowhere, I will venture to say, shall we find so large a proportion of merchants and manufacturers, nay, even of tradesmen and apprentices, who have gone a certain length in classical education, and know something more of Livy, and Horace, and Virgil, than the name. And yet, instead of the dulness, stupidity, and ignorance which ought, upon the anti-classical hypothesis, to result from such treatment, our fellow-townsmen have earned, from all unprejudiced strangers who have had the means of judging, a reputation for qualities the very reverse. I question much whether, in any town or city of the empire, there will be found a middle class of greater shrewdness and general intelligence.

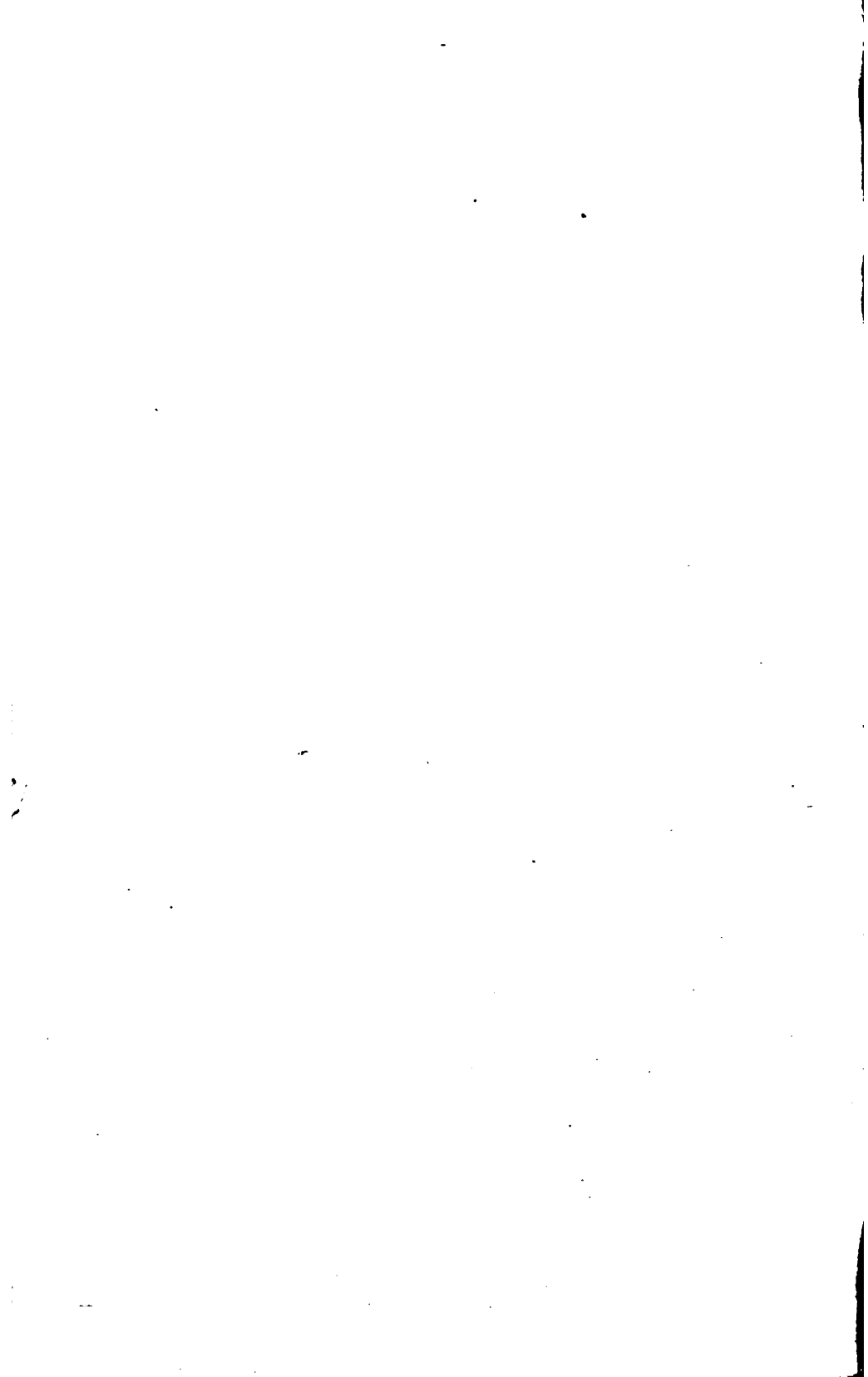
With such facts and reasonings to rest upon, we may well be excused if we turn a deaf ear to those who would persuade us to renounce the discipline in which our fathers and ourselves have been bred. The new-fangled notions and ill-concerted projects which are proposed as substitutes, if they did not fail altogether in the practice, would go no farther than either to train the youth to greater expertness in some handicraft, or to fill

their minds prematurely with scraps of science and philosophy ; or, at the best, to turn them out good mathematicians, and nothing else ;—a character immeasurably remote from Milton's description of that which a right and generous education ought to aim at producing.

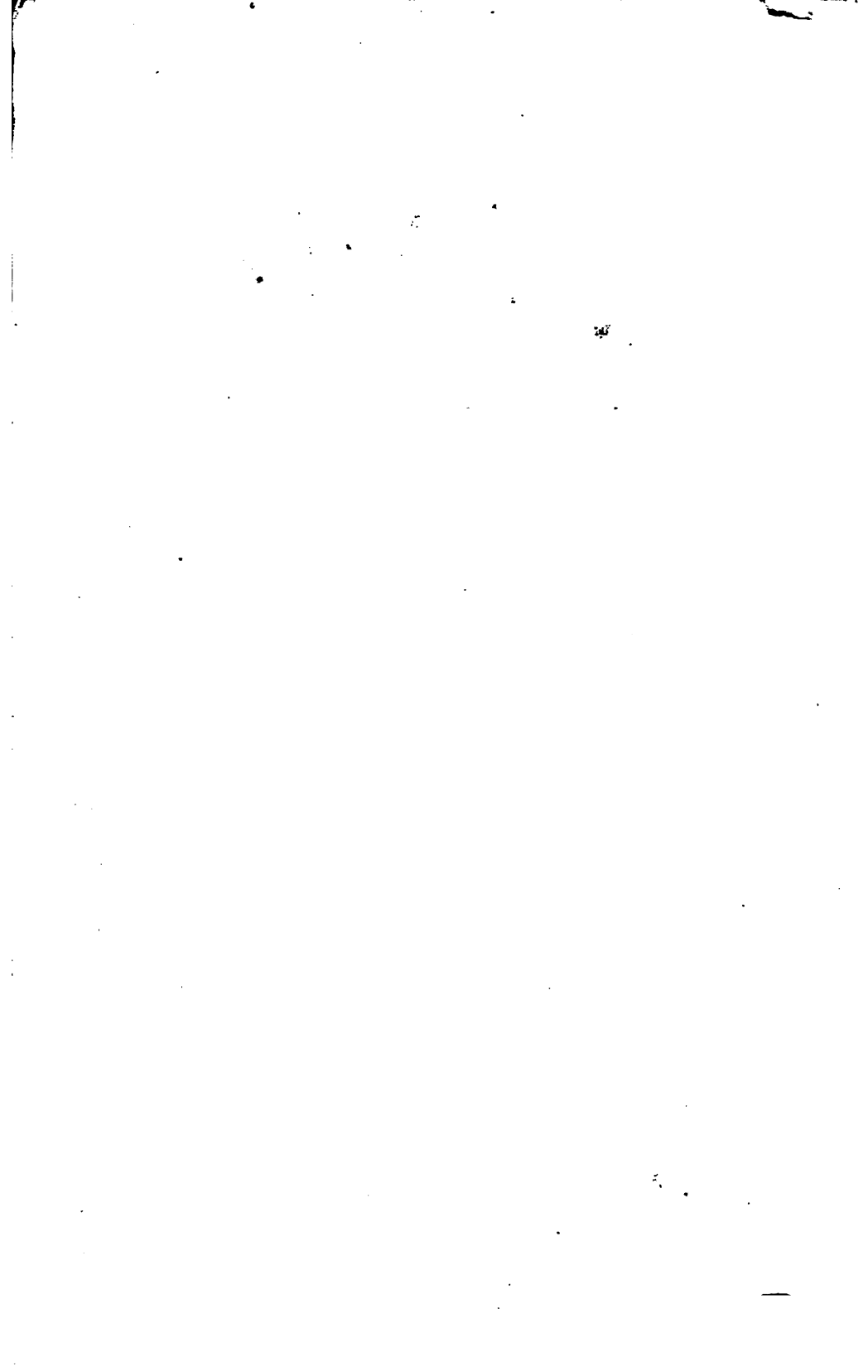
But while we adhere stedfastly to the principle, that a classical education is the best training for the youthful mind, and the finest equipment for exploring the fields of science and for playing our part in life, we must not shut our eyes to the fact, nor our minds to the conviction, that much is yet wanting to improve and perfect the discipline :

*Hoc opus, hoc studium, parvi properemus et ampli,  
Si patriæ volumus, si nobis, vivere cari.*

Let us drive the enemy from his last and strongest hold, by applying ourselves, with all earnestness, to rectify what is amiss in our methods of classical instruction, to disencumber the earlier stages of all that is mere rubbish and lumber, to simplify our grammars, and to infuse more philosophy into our treatment of the youthful mind,—adopting whatever is proved to be most effectual for exciting it to healthy action, for increasing its knowledge and invigorating its powers, but rejecting all nostrums that only fill the head with a jumble of words, and dispense with the exercise of every faculty but memory. Let us multiply our holds upon the pupil's attention, and double the interest of his lessons by associating the science and literature of our own country with those of Greece and Rome, thus entwining, as it were, the most graceful shoots of modern genius around the majestic pillar of ancient learning. It is then we may indulge the hope, that—while we strengthen and multiply the stays and buttresses that give stability to the Temple of our Commonwealth—no sacrilegious hand will be raised successfully against the graceful shaft and Corinthian capital, which at once support and adorn it.









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